THE SMART SET

A MAGAZINE OF CLEVERNESS

The entire contents of this magazine are protected by copyright in all countries and must not be reprinted.

Editor—J. W. MILNE

JANUARY, 1919

SAND	Neith Boyce	1
THE REVOLT	G. Vere Tyler	26
WIVES	William Drayham	27
THE JURY	Vennette Herron	33
THE RAIN ON THE ROOF	Elizabeth Irons Folsom	39
THE SUNDAY MORNING SLEEP MACHINE	Manchester Willdy	43
NOCTURNE	Orrick Johns	44
THE DARK ROOM	G. Frederick Macklin	45
THE SUCCESSOR TO MR. HENNERBY	Ben Hecht	55
THE FLIGHT	Samuel Roth	63
I MET THE RAIN	Louise Driscoll	66
DAWN	Donal Hamilton Haines	67
IN YOUTH	Oscar C. Williams	80
YOU CAN GET AWAY WITH A LOT	Thyra Samter Winslow	81
ONE INDIVIDUAL'S WAY	Max Saher	93
TRIOLET	George B. Jenkins, Jr.	93
HOUSES	Leslie Nelson Jennings	94
LA PIPE	Albert Terrade	95
ABOUT FASHIONS AND OTHER THINGS	Various Hands	98
MOTORS AND MOTORING	W. Whittall	102

Annual Subscription, 15/- post free. Foreign Subscription, 16/- post free.

Published by THE ROLLS HOUSE PUBLISHING CO., LTD., Breams Buildings, E.C., for the Proprietor, J. W. Da Costa.

"The Smart Set" Magazine, Dane's Inn House, 265 Strand, W.C. 2
to which all editorial and advertising matter should be addressed.

The INDIAN RESTAURANT

Have removed to

9, LEICESTER PLACE, W.C. 2

(*A minute's walk from Leicester Square*).

The place for Curries to suit all tastes. Dainty Oriental Teas 3 to 6 daily.

Patronized by Officers of H.M.'s Forces and Ladies and Gentlemen once Resident in India.

INDIAN CHEFS. SAME CUISINE. INDIAN MANAGEMENT.

THE SMART SET

A MAGAZINE OF CLEVERNESS

The entire contents of this magazine are protected by copyright in all countries and must not be reprinted.

Editor—J. W. MILNE

JANUARY, 1919

SAND	Neith Boyce	1
THE REVOLT	G. Vere Tyler	26
WIVES	William Drayham	27
THE JURY	Vennette Herron	33
THE RAIN ON THE ROOF	Elizabeth Irons Folsom	39
THE SUNDAY MORNING SLEEP MACHINE	Manchester Willdy	43
NOCTURNE	Orrick Johns	44
THE DARK ROOM	G. Frederick Macklin	45
THE SUCCESSOR TO MR. HENNERBY	Ben Hecht	55
THE FLIGHT	Samuel Roth	63
I MET THE RAIN	Louise Driscoll	66
DAWN	Donal Hamilton Haines	67
IN YOUTH	Oscar C. Williams	80
YOU CAN GET AWAY WITH A LOT	Thyra Samter Winslow	81
ONE INDIVIDUAL'S WAY	Max Saher	93
TRIOLET	George B. Jenkins, Jr.	93
HOUSES	Leslie Nelson Jennings	94
LA PIPE	Albert Terrade	95
ABOUT FASHIONS AND OTHER THINGS	Various Hands	98
MOTORS AND MOTORING	W. Whittall	102

Annual Subscription, 15/- post free. Foreign Subscription, 16/- post free.

Published by THE ROLLS HOUSE PUBLISHING CO., LTD., Breams Buildings, E.C., for the Proprietor, J. W. Da Costa.

"The Smart Set" Magazine, Dane's Inn House, 265 Strand, W.C. 2
to which all editorial and advertising matter should be addressed.

The INDIAN RESTAURANT

Have removed to

9, LEICESTER PLACE, W.C. 2

(*A minute's walk from Leicester Square*).

The place for Curries to suit all tastes. Dainty Oriental Teas 3 to 6 daily.

Patronized by Officers of H.M.'s Forces and Ladies and Gentlemen once Resident in India.

INDIAN CHEFS. SAME CUISINE. INDIAN MANAGEMENT.

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS.

The Cameo Corner is Famous

A sort of Jewel Annex to the British Museum, which it is near

BEADS - BEADS - BEADS

CHINESE CARNELIAN—NONE SO FASHIONABLE—NOT EXPENSIVE

Call to see the wonderful stock at **Cameo Corner**, which for ten years has been collecting, accumulating, from all ages, from all "corners" of the globe. Thousands of strings for you to choose from, all genuine, no imitations stocked. (Selections sent on approval to all parts of the Country.)

Round and Egg Shapes. Deep Red, Scarlet, Vermilion, Rose Red, Amber, Sang-de-Bœuf, Sang-de-Pigeons, Orange, Tangerine, Turquoise Blue, Jade-Green, Onyx, Agate, Jet, Pistache, Aqua-Marine, Peridots.

Please come when in London :: :: ***Visitors not asked to Purchase***

Antique Cameos and Intaglios Bought, Sold, and Exchanged

GOOD'S Cameo Corner,

1, NEW OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W.C. 1.

Telephone: Regent, 4296. *Telegrams:* "Goocamecor, Westcent, London."

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS.

BOOKS

"SYSTEMS AT RACING AND ROULETTE." A book of absorbing interest to all System lovers, showing how a regular and substantial Income can be earned with small capital. Price 3 penny stamps, SIMPLEX PUBLISHING, 1, New Oxford Street, London, W.C. 1.

SCIENCE

YOUR DESTINY.—A scientific investigation into the forces controlling your destiny. Interesting revelations. To know which send full birth-date with 2/6 P.O. A detailed delineation for 5/- and extended for 10/6. Include time and place of birth for these. Each order receives my personal attention.—ROBERT RAVE, 97 Brondesbury Villas, Kilburn, London, N.W.6

PERSONAL SERVICE

JUSTIN CHEVASSE, Private Investigator to the Aristocracy; French and Russian system of espionage; secrecy guaranteed; specially retained by solicitors, bankers, etc.—24, Bedford St., Strand. Tel., 7,683 Gerr. T.A., Chevasse, London.

WRIGHT'S DETECTIVES. For Private Inquiries and Secret Watchings this Agency stands facile princeps for ability; vide Press; consultations free. T.N., London Wall 8,977. Edgar Wright, Manager, 63, MOORGATE ST. (near Bank of England). West End Branch, 145, Oxford St., W. (T.N., Regent 4,830.)

LITERARY

AUTHORS—PRIZES.

WE offer PRIZES of £10, £5, and £2 for a SHORT STORY, ARTICLE, and POEM respectively. Also £100 for a Novel or Serial. No extra charges or deductions. Stamp for Prospectus.—Cambridge Literary Agency, 8, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

AUTHORS should forward Stories, Poems, Plays, Songs, ARTHUR STOCKWELL, 29, Ludgate Hill, London. Advice free.

£20 IN MONEY PRIZES are offered each month by the Monthly Magazine, **"THE FUTURE,"** for an **ESSAY**, and for short translations from **FRENCH** and **GERMAN** into **ENGLISH** and **ENGLISH** into **ESPERANTO**. All interested in Foreign Affairs, Art, Commerce, and Education, should read **"THE FUTURE"**—*vide* Press. Sec. No. 7d. for Specimen No.: **THE FUTURE** (Dept. S.S.), 10, ESSEX STREET, LONDON, W.C. 2.

Delightful

Both Spunella and Spunella de Chine have wearing and washing qualities not to be found in ordinary pure silks. They are perfectly loomed, cleverly designed, and exquisite in their soft, silky texture. Will not crease or crumple.

Write for Illustrated Booklet, "A SILKEN GIRDLE," post free from the Manufacturers.

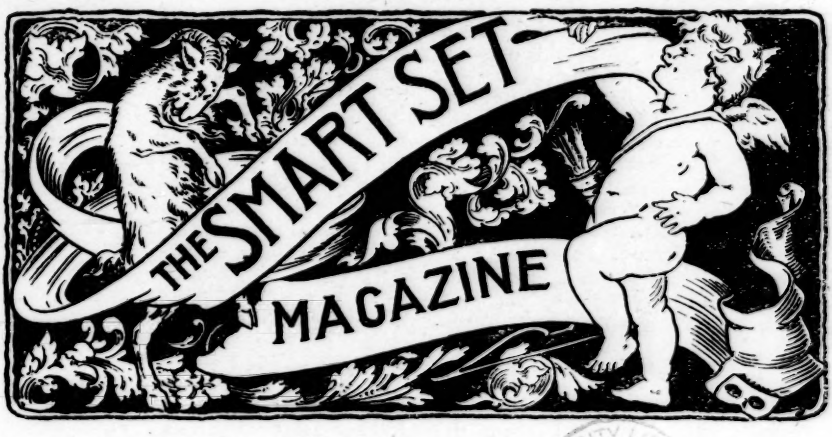
"Spunella" Regd

The Queen of Silks

Wholesale,
26 Cheapside,
London, E.C. 2

Look for words
SPUNELLA (REGD)
on the selvedge of each garment

Vol. LVII JANUARY, 1919 No. 1



SAND

By Neith Boyce

I

IF this year is like the last she'll go out in the November gales," said Captain Kirby firmly.

We stood looking at the old life-saving station, a low frame building half-buried in the embrace of the sand-dune. Swept closer every year by the winter storms the dune now loomed above the roof and blocked the western windows. A few feet from where we were standing it shelved sharply to the beach.

"Do you see where it's cut in under there? Every gale drives the sea up. A big storm will cut off twenty feet and out she'll go. Do you think the government would've condemned her for nothing?"

But "she," the condemned, looked so comfortable settled there in the broad arm of the dune—and the sea was twenty feet below, and now at high-tide the long white-crested rollers were breaking only half-way up the beach.

"Wait till you see a storm here," remarked Captain Kirby. "But likely you'll go with the rest of the summer folks in September."

"We may not. We love it here," I said.

"Do, eh?"

He looked at me with amusement and chuckled grimly. Then he turned his grey weathered face toward the barren sands. Half a mile away down the beach the new station stood up fresh and bleak. Otherwise the stretch of coast was perfectly bare and lonely—yellow-grey dune, white beach, dark blue sea broken near the shore by two long sandbars.

"Love it, eh? . . . The graveyard of the Cape, we call it," he muttered, and his little grey eyes under harsh brows stared at the sea as at an enemy.

"Come in and see what we have done to the house," I urged.

He followed me through the narrow entry. The whole place glistened in new white paint. The mess-room was now the kitchen, with bright blue pots hanging round the white walls, and the blue sea framed in the two small windows. The big room, completely panelled in wood, formerly dusky-brown, where the lifeboat had stood ready to be run out into stormy seas—

this was now the living room. It was white, too, lit up by bright flares of colour, orange, scarlet, blue, in cushions and covers. It had broad couches, deep chairs, a large new fireplace, books, flowers, gay china—all the modern litter of life, all Lorna's luxuries. On the walls were pinned up some of Rudolf's "primitive" charcoal drawings—and I noticed that Captain Kirby averted his eyes from these hastily.

He inspected pleasantly everything else, including the rooms on the upper floor, the new bathroom, the bedrooms in white muslin and chintz. Then we came down again. The stairs, narrow and steep, were exactly like a companion ladder. In fact, the whole place was built like a boat. Perhaps this was the reason Captain Kirby referred to it as "she." With a last glance around as we went out he said quietly:

"She doesn't look like the same place I lived in for thirty years. You people have spent an awful lot of money on her. It does seem a pity she can't be moved back up there on the dune. It could be done—but it would cost money."

"If the house has stood for thirty years, surely it may last our time," I suggested. "A few years—"

"November!" said Captain Kirby, with an obstinate glance at me.

Just then Rudolf and Lorna came round the corner of the house and passed us, nodding at the Captain. They were both in bathing suits, and Lorna's was exactly like Rudolf's. I noticed that Captain Kirby modestly gave but one fleeting look at her long bare arms and legs.

"Hey!" he shouted suddenly.

They stopped and turned round, and keeping his eyes fixed on Rudolf, he inquired sharply:

"Going in?"

Rudolf nodded, smiling.

"Well, you keep close to shore then!" roared the Captain.

"Oh, yes—just a plunge."

"Can the lady swim?"

"Yes!" Lorna called back in her high, clear voice.

"Well, you look out! Don't you get out by them bars—there's an undertow would drown an elephant out there!"

"All right!" laughed Rudolf, and they went on down to the beach.

"All right!" echoed Captain Kirby grimly, his mouth shutting tight under his grey moustache.

"Is there danger really?" I asked. "They're always going in."

"Haven't I told you folks every day since you come?" demanded the Captain in an exasperated tone. "Some days it's all right—but you get a different kind of wind and sea and it'll pull you down, I don't care how strong a swimmer you be. And what do you folks know about currents and weather? But if you won't believe it, you won't!"

And, quite crimson all of a sudden, he climbed into his light buggy, laid the whip on the nervous horse and was off, the wheels sinking six inches deep in the sand.

Down below I saw Lorna run into the water and plunge head-foremost through a breaker, and Rudolf followed her.

I looked into the open door of the old stable, now a sculptor's studio, and called:

"Jeremy! Come out a minute!"

"I'm working!" was the curt response.

"Come out! I want to ask you something!"

He came, his clothes and bare arms daubed with clay, looking very cross. I repeated what the Captain had said.

"Do *you* think there's any danger?" I demanded.

"Danger, no!" he said with irritation. "Those old salts are always croaking! . . . Sitting around all day with nothing to do makes 'em nervous."

"All the same there *is* an undertow. And Rudolf's fearfully reckless—"

"Rudolf! He isn't a patch on Lorna. If they get drowned it will be her own fault!" snapped Jeremy. "*Rudolf's* got nothing to do with it—"

He looked gloomily at the two below

bobbing about gaily in the surf, and then cast a belligerent glance at me.

"He's the stronger—you'll see, she'll go under first!" I predicted.

"She floats like a cork! If anybody goes under it'll be Rudolf," retorted Jeremy. "She'll take him out till the undertow gets hold of him, and then—"

This was our old dispute. We were not talking now about Captain Kirby's undertow. No, it was what was going on between those two, under our eyes. For months—ever since we four had been living together in the house on the sand—Jeremy and I had quarrelled about this.

"If you're worried, why don't you try to stop them?" he said, now maliciously.

Stop them? There was no answer to that. You might as well try to stop the wind blowing, or the sand moving before it.

"Well, I've got to work—don't come interrupting me again unless somebody gets drowned," and Jeremy dived back into the stable.

I wandered off over the dune. Dipping down below its crest, the house disappeared, and the sea showed only a glimpse here and there with the white sails passing. There was a wide bowl-like space walled in the distance by the fantastic forms of the dunes. In it was a little copse of scrub-oaks and a small cranberry bog; stretches of bayberry; then a quicksand, and a buried wood. There was silence, the stir of the wind in the bay-bushes and the slim reedgrass, the sound of the sea—and the eternal whirr of the sand . . . sliding, swishing, clicking softly . . . whispering mysteriously . . .

Lorna had taken one of her intense fancies for this dune-country. In the winter she had bought the old station, by sealed bid, for a few hundred dollars, and had spent a good deal more making it over, filling it with her own colour, throwing herself into it, as she did into anything that she touched. The house was just Lorna, this ultra-civilized spot in the midst of barren sand! This intense personal expression, jealously shut in upon itself, isolated, solitary—this was Lorna.

I had come with her rather unwillingly. Never had I been able to refuse anything she wanted of me—nor had any one else, so far as I knew. How soft and insinuating she could be—like this sand—and how hard! How pliant and flowing she had seemed, how she had seemed to take every suggestion I made to her. And now? Oppose her and it was like facing a stinging blinding storm of sand in a northwest gale! . . . It hadn't quite come to that yet—it was only that when I tried to seize her and hold her to something, she slipped between my fingers. . . .

II

I SUPPOSE I had come really on Ellery's account. He had been my friend long before he married Lorna. The break between them, a year before, had broken *him*. Even now he could hardly believe her desertion. He loved her and wanted her back, in spite of everything. And she always spoke so affectionately to me of Ellery that until lately I had believed that they might make it up. But now they were discussing divorce. Ellery's letters to me were full of misery. He was a conventional man, with deep family pride and feeling. He was cut to the quick. Why had she left him?

It was not because of Rudolf, for he came afterward. Lorna had left her husband because, as she said to me, she was "bored." She was independent of him as to money, they had no children, so it was easy—for her. But I could not make out her feeling—or her complete lack of feeling. As I say, she spoke affectionately of Ellery always—but as though he were a chance acquaintance that she liked—or as though he were dead. Their marriage of six years was for her as though it had never been. Gone—swept away—blotted out—it had not left a trace upon her. I could hardly grasp this. Ellery—whom this marriage had crushed—could not grasp it at all. That she spoke

pleasantly about him was the last straw—it infuriated him. Certainly he never spóke pleasantly about Lorna!

"You never loved Ellery at all," I had said to her once.

"Oh, yes, I did—very much," she had protested, in astonishment. "I wouldn't have lived with him for six years if I hadn't loved him!"

"And you just stopped loving him—like that? Why? Did he change in any way? All you've said to me is that you were bored!"

"Well, that was it," Lorna said reflectively. "Of course you could put it in different words. But—it ceased to be life-enhancing. It didn't go on—nothing happened, in his life or mine. It was dull, stagnant. And I can't bear that!"

"You want to live in a whirl of excitement always?"

"No. I could live in a desert, with one person. But something must be happening. I must feel that I'm *living*. That one person must interest me."

"And Ellery ceased to interest you?"

"Yes," she said, looking tragic. "And I can't *live* unless I'm interested. I go out—like a lighted candle in a vacuum."

I knew what she meant. I had seen her during the last months of her life with Ellery, looking oppressed, extinguished, annihilated. She had grown ten years younger since then. She had escaped from something that was stifling her. She was as full of life as ever, as eager to live—perhaps more so. And this was what Ellery couldn't understand, what so wounded and angered him. *He* couldn't begin a new life. He had been hurt, injured—and she hadn't a scar. She had stabbed him, and escaped scatheless, so he had said to me, in bitter rage. Even now he was bound to her in feelings he hated her and couldn't forget her. But Lorna didn't hate Ellery in the least. She had simply slipped her bonds and was free of him—so free that she could see all his good qualities, admire him, and hope he would be happy.

Jeremy understood all this perfectly—or seemed to. He was less than thirty in years, but a century old in experience. How he got the experience I can't imagine, for he had as little as possible to do with human beings. He held himself aloof with an air of shocked timidity and observed them, as it were, through his fingers. But he observed; nothing escaped his shrewd glance. He had an uncanny sympathy with Lorna. He had known her a long time and had never been at all in love with her. So she was perfectly frank with him.

Jeremy understood women much better than he did men (and liked them less). He and I disputed hotly about Rudolf—I could not at all share his enthusiasm, his almost worship, of that talented and beautiful youth. I granted Rudolf beauty—of a certain kind—and talent; Jeremy insisted he was a genius, and frail—as he said all genius was. Rudolf frail! And he thought it perfectly natural that Lorna should have fallen madly in love with the wonderful boy, and seized upon him—trust Lorna for that! But he wailed for Adonais—how he did wail!

"A pure artist—if he's left alone! But women won't let him alone! They would rather have him all tangled up, making love to them, than following out his destiny, producing works of beauty! Merely because he happens to have a pleasing and romantic exterior—yes, and because they feel that intensity in him which they want to divert to their own purposes, instead of leaving it where it belongs, in the service of Art—oh, it's a shame! It's too bad of Lorna!"

"He's an egotistic boy!" I contradicted sulkily. "Lorna loves him to distraction, and he takes it all as if it were his right! . . . There's Ellery, a man worth dozens of Rudolf—thrown aside—and Lorna determined to marry this stripling! He'll spend her money and break her heart—it will be the old story of an older woman loving a boy—"

"Ha!" cried Jeremy, divided between anger and mirth. Rudolf doesn't care a hang for money. And as for her heart—break Lorna's heart! Oh, gods

and little fishes! . . . Better find out, before you weep about that, whether she's *got* a heart!"

So we disagreed flatly as to what was happening—if it wasn't love I didn't know what it was—I thought I had never seen any one so much in love as Lorna. Within our solitude, cut off from the world as we were, she made an inner solitude for herself and Rudolf. She drew as it were a flaming ring about herself and him. They were always alone together—at least for the first four months. And Lorna had transformed herself for him, grown young, simple, active, joyous—reflecting as in a bright mirror, his careless, insolent youth. . . .

They roamed endlessly about the dunes, swam recklessly in defiance of Captain Kirby, sometimes went off and had picnic meals by themselves in the open; or Lorna posed and Rudolf sketched; or they read together. They went about bare-footed, in scanty clothes, and were brown from sun and wind and sea; and Lorna grew more slim and lithe and looked like an Indian, with her black hair flowing. And Rudolf, blond and brilliant as a young sun-god (according to Jeremy), sang and laughed and whistled. They seemed very happy, and as though they were going on this way for ever—as though this brimming cup of love could never be emptied!

Rudolf took it as his right—gaily, lightly. But Lorna was more intense, more intent—it was, for the time, her whole life. To him love seemed a joyous banquet—to her, food and drink that she was starving, thirsting for.

III

I THOUGHT Rudolf a rude young barbarian. He was the "blond beast," the superman, in his own imagination. He was to bestride the world like a colossus. He must be brilliant, dashing, successful in whatever he undertook, and must do it all carelessly, with perfect ease, lordly indifference—that was his idea. The usual self-confidence and vanity of youth—but Rudolf overdid it. He admired and praised himself, and patronized every one about him, with perfect simplicity. His work was good, Jeremy said, and full of promise. He drew very cleverly, with great facility and sureness. And he was certain of being a great painter.

"As great," he said calmly, "as El Greco—and you can't say more than that."

Then he would look at you with his light bright blue eyes, superbly. Youth, beauty, genius, love—he had them all, of course!

His head really was beautiful—round, with small well-set ears, close-clipped curling hair, brow and eyes like the Hermes. But there was a weakness in his face. His finely-curved mouth was too small, and his chin. He had a habit of throwing his head back and thrusting his chin out, making it as firm and masculine as possible. It looked like a natural arrogant gesture. It was really a self-betrayal. But you had to know Rudolf well to see through his bluff, his perpetual challenge. All that I saw in him for the first few months was a spoiled, conceited petulant boy, with bad manners. He snubbed Jeremy, who flattered him outrageously. And he treated Lorna with a cool assumption of mastery, calmly taking her adoration for granted. Seeing that I disliked him he ignored me as far as possible.

Altogether, we were not a congenial party, but fortunately that didn't matter much. Jeremy was serenely independent of everything but his work, and he worked happily all day long in the old studio. And the beauty of the place was enough for me—the sea, the strangeness of the dunes, the magical silence and remoteness. Sometimes I went over to the new station and talked to the life-savers. In summer they led a slightly monotonous life. The main events seemed to be dinner, at ten o'clock in the morning, and supper, at four in the afternoon.

After that there was nothing to look forward to. Except the weekly leave

to go to town—they took it in turn, and the man who was off for the day was called the "liberty-man." They had some quaint turns of speech, and could tell grisly stories in a few matter-of-fact words. Captain Kirby showed me the "wreck-book"—his record of duty—and complained mildly of having the worst station on the coast. The next station, he informed me, hadn't had a wreck all last winter.

"But I," he said gently, "had eight wrecks and seventeen God-damned corpses."

Then I would go up to see the look-out in his glassed-in observatory at the top of the station. He was supposed to record every ship that passed—so many "barks," so many "vessels." Perched on a stool, with a small telescope or glass in his hand, he was supposed, as I say, to watch the sea. But pretty frequently his eye was turned on the dunes. He would chuckle, looking through the glass, and say:

"There's that same couple I see yesterday. When they git out of sight of town they imagine nobody can see 'em!"

Then he would say a few caustic things about "summer folks."

* * * * *

So we came to July. Golden days with the white clouds floating over, like the sails of the fishers on the sea—grey days when the fog shut down around the house and there was nothing of the outside world but hoarse bellows and shrieks from the passing boats.

Sometimes in the evening Captain Kirby would come over for an hour or so, and tell us stories of winter wrecks and dead men. I urged him to come oftener, for the evenings at our house were growing rather strange.

It had been all right at first, for Lorna and Rudolf were roaming the dunes, or if it were stormy they were so tired and lazy after their active day that Lorna would simply lie on a couch and Rudolf on the floor before the fire, and there was peace. But now many a moonlight night, they stayed in—Lorna darkly shining, Rudolf with cloudy, stormy blue eyes. And there was Jeremy, psychic and watchful, like a young owl in his corner. And there was talk, endless talk, that played about the fringes of things; that hinted and darted and skimmed like a dragon-fly on a pool. There were endless arguments about people and books and art.

The part Rudolf took in these was to come crashing in with dogmatic assertion, with the impatience and cocksureness of his spoiled youth. Generally we three were against him, whereupon he would burst out in anger or sulk. It became more and more clear that when it came to ideas Lorna and he disagreed completely. It was quite evident that these evenings bored him; but Lorna kept us all there. She seemed rather to enjoy tormenting Rudolf. She became more and more fantastic and phantasmal.

Jeremy and she echoed one another and played psychic subtleties as other people would have played cards. They took to table-tapping and spirit-writing when tired of talking about dreams and ghosts. One witch-like evening of mist and silence they were sure they had evoked something. There were wandering, stumbling footsteps about the house, and deep mournful sighs. We all heard them, and went out and searched vainly—all except Rudolf, who had hurled himself off over the dunes in a rage. . . . But it turned out to be the old horse from the station, who had wandered back to his former quarters and found the stable door shut. And this making a ghost of the old horse was rather typical of the evenings in that white restless room.

Restless, restless, was its spirit now—meaning glances, veiled words, half-hints, cryptic obliqueness. . . . It was like a spell laid upon us; and Rudolf tried in vain to break through it; instead, it broke through *his* guard sometimes. There were times when we felt haunted; when the deep crashing of the sea under us threatened doom; when the hill of sand above us seemed suspended there, ready to fall and crush

us; when Lorna's dark magnetic eyes glowed at us as though she were invoking destruction on our heads.

Jeremy, though he assuredly played up to Lorna, insisted to me that this was all her doing, that this atmosphere was her creation, that she would ruin Rudolf by it, kill his artistic nature.

"It *is* Lorna," he said to me one day. "It's what she lives in—but it's no more a human atmosphere than the moon's is. And when she's infatuated, as she is with Rudolf, she never rests till she's transported the object of her infatuation bodily away, into her own world, and shut him up there. That's what she's doing to Rudolf. But is *that* the kind of a world for an artist to live in? It kills him! . . . What he needs is a perfectly simple human background, if any—something warm, comforting, not too obvious, not too absorbing. What can Lorna do for him, except blow down all over him and smother him?"

We were sitting on the sand in the hollow, and I suppose the tops of the desiccated trees before us suggested the simile.

"There's nothing to hold Lorna," Jeremy went on. "She has to go on. And in my opinion she'll finish Rudolf next—yes, finish him," he repeated gloomily. "She'll take all he can give, and then—"

He had been heaping up the sand before him, making a queer snaky figure. With a sweep of his hand he demolished it.

"Perhaps she *has* taken all—all he can give *her*," he said meditatively. "I think, myself, she's getting tired. . . ."

And he shot a malicious glance at me.

My heart sank. The imp had divined a thought I had not uttered, and he knew, too, how it affected me.

"What's she about?" I cried. "One can't take up people like that and drop them, one after another! One can't have a grand passion—and get over it in a few months!"

"Can't one?" said Jeremy calmly. "Lorna can—you'll see."

"How do *you* know? You mean it's happened *before?*"

"No, she never was in love before—at least not just this way—but now she has been."

"Has been!"

"Yes, has been . . . You needn't think it would satisfy her for ever. After all, for her Rudolf's only a boy—a charming youth. She doesn't really care for the artist in him."

Jeremy patted and moulded the sand before him into a fantastic female outline.

"I won't believe it!" I assured him angrily. "Lorna isn't as light-minded as that!"

"She's not light-minded at all," he returned serenely. "Quite the contrary. If anything she's too intense, too piercing. She's geared at too high a speed for most people, you see, she wears them out—gets what she can from them—and goes on. When she can't get any more she has to go on."

"Go on! *Where?* What is she *after?* What is it that she *wants?*"

"*I* don't know," said Jeremy. "Perhaps she doesn't know herself. Sometimes I think she's very earthly, even for a woman—"

"You snip!"

"—but when she grows restless, nothing can satisfy her . . . I don't know what she's after—unless it's the Absolute!"

He laughed, looked at his model, and effaced it with a touch. A gust of wind blew over us, and the sand came trickling, sliding down the slope behind us.

"I wonder if she will ever go back to Ellery," I said.

"No," said Jeremy. "She never goes back."

IV

MIDSUMMER made no change about us; blue sea and white sand were the same. Day after day was cloudless, with turquoise sky and the sea ultramarine, with green and purple where the sand-bars lay. But there came a south wind, shifting to east, and a solid week of rain. We were driven to close

quarters. The bedrooms were cold and there was only the one big living-room. At first Rudolf tried to work there. He made drawings of Lorna, one after another, and crumpled them up and tossed them into the fire. They talked little, and were both very restless. Sometimes they would go out for a walk in the rain. Rudolf smoked incessantly and began to look pale and out of sorts. Lorna watched him with her big dark moody eyes and would say sharp things to him when he couldn't work. She could be as cutting as the east wind and she was, pretty often.

When the sun shone out again we all, with deep sighs of relief, fled apart in different directions and didn't meet except at meals for some days. But the moral atmosphere didn't clear up; there was storm in the air. The nervous tension between those two continued and broke out occasionally in a word or a look. Rudolf looked gloomy and sulky and Lorna was positively malign. What had happened? Jeremy said airily:

"They're getting on each other's nerves, that's all. What can you expect—shut up together like this? No man can stand it." He scowled and added, "Rudolf can't work any more. If he doesn't clear out he's lost."

"You want him to go?"

"Certainly I do. But Lorna won't let him."

"I thought you said she was getting tired of him!"

"Yes, but she isn't ready to let him go yet—especially if he wants to."

"And does he want to?"

"He wants a change," said Jeremy crisply.

It was soon after this that Rudolf broke away—hastily packed a valise and fled. They had quarrelled, it seems, and Lorna had gone off by herself on the dunes—and came back to the house to find that he had flown. She was stunned. Then she flew into a rage, followed by a thunderstorm of tears. I had never seen her weep before. She sobbed violently for hours.

"Where is he gone?" she demanded of Jeremy and me. "You know where he is! I want him back. You tell him he's got to come back! If he doesn't I'll go after him."

Jeremy and I sat up all that night, trying to reason with her, to quiet her—but she only cried like a heart-broken child and repeated,

"I want him to come back!"

After a week's frenzied correspondence by letter and telegram, Rudolf did come back, much to Jeremy's disgust. Then they were happy again, Rudolf and Lorna. The clouds had disappeared, they both beamed joyously. Again they wandered together, on the dunes and the beach, and forgot Jeremy and me. It was like the first days over again—almost.

Almost—but with a subtle difference. It was as though they had both grown older. There was a shadow, after all. The first fine careless rapture was gone, try as they might they couldn't sing the same song twice over. There was a shade of melancholy. And sometimes they quarrelled quite openly. Something had happened while Rudolf was away; Lorna was jealous. She would fling out biting comments on the nature of men. Rudolf would retort, withering remarks on the nature of women. Then they would patch it up again.

Jeremy sulked, spending more time than ever in his studio, often working there in the evening. I would go in and sit with him sometimes, but he didn't talk much. He would rumple his hair fiercely or toss up his hands with a gesture of total rejection.

"I wash my hands of them," he would say. "But mark my words, it will end in a smash—a big smash . . . And it ought to, too," he added. "That's the only excuse for it . . . If people are going to be fools they ought to be real desperate fools—not just ordinary. . . . And I guess our friends will qualify, all right. They're eating each other up as fast as they can—and pretty soon, instead of two of them there won't be any."

"You've lost interest in Rudolf," I remarked.

"Yes," he admitted. "There's isn't enough left of him to be interested in. When a man doesn't exist apart from some woman—well, what can you do? Breathe a prayer for his departed soul—and pass on."

One evening Jeremy favoured us with some general ideas, as follows:

"Things are all wrong nowadays. There's too much Woman in the Cosmos. It isn't a man's world any more. Women have got out of their orbit and they're careering all over the place, smashing everything. They're only good in their place. As long as they were kept in it they were all right, and we had elbow-room. But now they're too much for us. Soon and late, getting and spending, they lay waste our powers. Nothing we see in nature that is ours. There's hardly a corner anywhere now where we can get away from you! You've knocked all the romance and adventure out of the world—out of us—and now we begin to bore you. You've tamed us—and you don't like us tame! *You* don't know what's the matter—you think it's our fault that we aren't interesting any more!"

"And you think it's *our* fault?" said Lorna languidly.

"Certainly it is! You've lost your faith in us. That's your own weakness. Faith is the measure of power. You can't love without faith. If you women don't worship you're worse than useless, you're evil. And you don't worship any more—neither us nor anything else."

"Not blindly—that's true," said Lorna in a low voice. "We see you as you are."

"Do you?" mocked Jeremy. "You think you do—and much good it does you!"

"Yes, it doesn't do us much good," Lorna admitted darkly. "Why couldn't you keep us ignorant?"

"We wanted you to know enough to appreciate us properly," said Jeremy. "But you don't—not yet."

"We must know you as you are—and yet worship?" said Lorna with irony.

Jeremy nodded fiercely.

"You must see us as we are—and as we may be. You must have faith in our possibilities and cherish us for them. You must take the will for the deed and believe in our widest reach as though we had already grasped! You must see us as we want to be. In that way you can help us—in every other way you hurt us, hurt the best in us, you destroy us and we—hate you for it."

Jeremy's eyes flashed and he looked balefully at Lorna.

"*You* needn't hate me," she said. "I haven't done anything to you."

"I hate you impersonally," said Jeremy. "Personally, as you know, I'm fond of you. But you do a lot of harm—more than most women, because you have more energy."

"Do you think so?" asked Lorna thoughtfully.

Jeremy shot a keen glance at her.

"Yes—and I think you like it, too," he said sharply.

V

LORNA fell into a fit of gloom, intense, abysmal. She shut herself up in her room, lay in bed and read books of religious philosophy. Late the second night she came into my room, wrapped in a white gown, her hair loose, her great dark eyes jaded and burning. Her look—it was that of the "after-dream of the reveller upon opium—the bitter dropping off of the veil, the lapse into everyday life." Yes, the intoxication of love was past—I could see that now plainly. And now she was paying for it, in the re-action, in the terrible necessity to face life without it, to face the daylight after that feverish dream. That was what she had been going through in her seclusion, and now she was willing to talk about it; she had to talk about it, even in the midst of her suffering. There was always a part of her that stood aloof and could look on calmly, whatever happened.

"What I don't like about this," she began abruptly, casting herself upon my bed, "is that it's ridiculous! It's absurd to go into something that seems for your whole life, and find it dwindle away and come to nothing! I don't understand how feelings can change like that! There must be something the matter with me—or with other people."

As I was silent, merely looking at her, she inquired with irritation:

"Why don't you say something? Have you got any ideas about it?"

"Oh, yes," I replied. "Plenty. But you won't like them."

"No matter whether I do or not!"

"Then I think that the trouble is with you. I think you will never find what you seek. I think you will be unhappy yourself and make other people unhappy—those that care about you."

"Why?" Lorna asked, sullenly.

"Because you've cut away from your base—you've broken your connection with life."

"Do you mean Ellery?" she inquired.

"It might have been Ellery. You should have had children. Of course it isn't too late. But you're on the wrong track. As you're going on now you'll have the miseries of men and none of their consolations. You're seeking what they seek and you'll never find it. Neither do they ever find it. But the search is enough for them—but it won't be for you, nor for any woman. You're throwing away your birthright!"

"And what is that?" she asked ironically.

"The earth and the fulness thereof—that's what we're born to. We're a part of it, we're based on it, absolutely, securely, by instinct. We're at home there—and man is only a wandering visitor, for ever trying to make himself at home. He had no secure base. Shall we imitate him?"

"Men are absurd," said Lorna darkly.

"Certainly they are," I agreed, "and wonderful—like children. They are always children and we never are. So we ought to love them like children. We are their mothers and nothing else. It's enough. But you, Lorna, have never been a mother to anything."

"Perhaps," she said with a question. "But I *have* been devoted to Rudolf—I wanted him to work—"

"No, I think you just took possession of him," I interrupted. "You shared his illusion."

"Then you think there can be no illusion for us?" she said after a pause.

"No—we have reality, we don't need illusion. But they do, it's vital to them—and we should try not to spoil it for them. They must dream and try to realize their dreams. But it's at our peril if *we* dream! You've been dreaming, Lorna."

"Then love is a dream?" she asked.

"Nothing else—the sort of love you mean—and with a bitter wakening. You will never find the lover you seek. You will never find a man to love you for yourself, only for what you give him. Therefore—give!"

"Always, only that?"

"Always. The love that has no bitterness. Think how one loves a child, to feed and cherish, comfort and care for it, watch its growth and feel the wonder of it, forgive its errors and failures!—isn't that the love that all men need?"

"So we must live perpetually in the nursery?" said Lorna sardonically.

"Yes, or be condemned to sterility . . . Nurses of the body or the spirit—that's what we must be!"

Lorna sat up, her unwinking dark eyes fixed on me, expressing a profound rejection of those views.

"We can never meet them on an equality, then—frankly, face to face, each for what we are?" she said slowly.

"Never!"

"We can't be comrades, sharing their lives, their adventures—?"

"No, we are too different. We're the earth to their sky. And we should *be* the earth—fertile, warm, nourishing, solid! . . . The earth and the sky don't meet, except in illusion! . . . You've been seeking the pot of gold at the rainbow's end!"

Lorna brooded.

"So we should forgive them, whatever they do?"

"Of course. We understand and they don't, by instinct. They have to experiment and hurt themselves and us. Couldn't you forgive a child of yours—no matter what it did—would it make any difference to your love?"

"But they're *not* children!" said Lorna with an angry flash.

"In our world, they are—in relation to us. If you take them any other way you get the worst of them."

"It seems to me," said Lorna, after a pause, "that you take a very superior attitude toward them."

"Superior in one way, inferior in another. Of course, we're best in our own line—what would be the use of us if we weren't? But we can't be what they are—you know it yourself, Lorna. They are the sky to our earth! The light, the fire, the glimpse into space, into infinity . . the imagination that makes of life something beyond life, the restless spirit, the perpetual reaching out—"

"You think we have none of that?" flashed Lorna.

"Only when we live in a desert—as you do, Lorna. . . . We can be content, satisfied, and they never can. We have a reason for existence—and they have to find one. Man has to justify his own existence to himself. We don't need to, provided we're useful to somebody. He has to establish a connection between himself and the universe. We don't need to—ours is ready made. Some of us cut it away and live in the sand where nothing grows."

"As I do, you think?" said Lorna.

"Haven't you?" I asked.

She was silent for a time, then looked up at me piercingly.

"You owe me a grudge, on account of Ellery," she said.

"Well—yes," I admitted.

"You're very fond of him?"

"Very."

"And you could have taken care of him—and all that?"

"Perhaps."

"Perhaps you could still?" she suggested.

"Perhaps. But I think he is too much broken."

Again a silence.

"I think men generally love women best who are not good for them," she said.

"Yes. They must run into danger—like the moth into the candle. They must burn their wings."

"Then they fly away from this maternal love that you describe—into the candle? Why is that?"

"They seek what strikes their imagination. But behind that brightness they look for the other thing—for cherishing love—and if they don't find it they are destroyed in that imaginative impulse. Their wings are burnt and they can fly no more."

"And we—if what we seek fails us—if we can't get what we want—what about *us?*"

"It need never fail us. We shouldn't demand. We should pass on the torch. Do we demand love from our children? We get what we earn."

"Your idea of woman," said Lorna pensively, "seems to be a widowed mother."

"And yours, a childless mistress," I retorted.

She got up smiling and held out her hand.

"I like you better for that! I was sure you couldn't be as milky-mild as you seem! . . . We shall never understand one another—but anyhow we might be friends?"

She clasped my hand frankly, cordially, and looked at me in her most winning way. She had a great charm—and she knew well enough I felt it. So I kissed her good-night—yes, I was actually fond of her, in spite of Ellery—and that says a good deal.

VI

For some time after that life went on very quietly—whatever might be simmering in the depths, the surface was calm. Lorna reappeared, vivid and full

of energy, and took to modelling with Jeremy in the studio. She worked with feverish intensity and produced some rough sketches in clay which Jeremy said were "darned good." Her general manner was off-hand, but pleasant. She seemed to say, "Oh, well, let's not make a fuss about anything." She treated Rudolf with genial carelessness —and he brightened up. He began to work again, and whistled as he went about. . . .

The first time that Rudolf and Lorna tied themselves together with a rope when they went into the sea, Jeremy and I exchanged portentous glances. We both disliked it intensely. That was a very calm day, hot August weather, and nothing happened. But in the night a storm blew up from the north-west, cleared away the low clouds and sent the sea crashing in. A glorious racy blue and white day followed. About noon Rudolf and Lorna took the rope and went off down the beach. They started to walk along the sand-bar from where it joined the beach, half a mile below us. The surf was breaking on the bar in glittering foam and they would bury themselves in it and then emerge and walk on. Jeremy and I sat watching them; we could hear them shouting with glee. At the end of the bar, nearly opposite us, Lorna stood for a moment—then she evidently had the idea of swimming from there to the beach, and stepped off into deep water. In an instant we saw that something was wrong. I leaped up and cried out. Lorna seemed to be whirled out and under. . . .

Rudolf was still on the bar, with one end of the rope round him. Instead of pulling Lorna out he leaped in after her. We saw them both struggling in that yeasty whirl and they both began crying terribly for help.

Jeremy and I tumbled down the slope to the beach, shouting. We saw the life-savers running down from the station. Man after man came pelting down, the last two half-dressed. A dory was hauled up on the beach. They ran it out, six of them piled in and they began to pull madly. We heard strangling cries from Lorna. She was floating on her back in the eddy; but Rudolf had disappeared. Jeremy and I toiled up the beach. It seemed to me that my legs were rooted in the sand. It took incredible effort to get a step forward.

For uncounted ages I watched the boat flying toward them, and struggled through the sand. . . . Then we saw Lorna pulled roughly into the boat, and then a limp drowned body came to the surface and they hauled that in, and came flying back to shore. I saw them land, saw Lorna standing up, saw the group of men round Rudolf. When we finally got up to them they were working violently over him, doubling him up, pumping his arms up and down, beating him. He was unconscious and blue in the face and making awful noises. Lorna looked white and sick.

"Is he dead?" I cried.

"I don't know," she said, looking strangely at me.

"Can't tell yet," growled Captain Kirby, down on his knees in the sand.

It is a terrible thing to see a dead person brought to life—What struggles, what grotesque cruelty to the inert body! . . . Captain Kirby told me afterward that it was twenty minutes before they could get him to breathe again. It was an hour before he recovered consciousness. They had filled him with whiskey and put him to bed. Lorna too, was pretty sick from the shock and the water she had followed. When Captain Kirby took his leave of us he said:

"Well, it was just a chance that we had that dory on the beach, going after our lobster-pots. If we'd had to get the other boat down we couldn't've saved 'em. . . . Perhaps you people will believe what I tell you after this. . . . I don't tell you no fairy-tales! . . ."

And he departed in triumph, and later brought over a lot of official papers which had to be filled out and signed, to be sent to Washington.

Rudolf, too, was triumphant when he was able to sit up and talk about it. His pale face quite shone with pleasure. His eyes were clear and child-like. He

beamed ingenuously as he told us how he had died. He had had all the sensations of dying—no one could possibly have any more—and he had had wonderful visions, too, of form and colour, at the moment of death. Yes, Rudolf was pleased with himself, as we all scurried about and waited on him, Lorna too, and listened to him. He was simple, touchingly so. He said he was born anew, that he was going to have a wonderful new life, and his eyes sought Lorna eagerly. . . .

Lorna did not respond. She was silent, white, languid. All the energy and life had gone out of her.

We left Rudolf to sleep, and Lorna went out by herself on the dunes, and stayed all the afternoon. Lunch had been forgotten. Jeremy and I snatched a cold bite and then collapsed, exhausted. There was a marvellous sunset that night—great scarlet and purple flares across the sky beyond the headland that jutted out to the west. We lay on the top of the dune and watched it in silence.

As it began to fade Lorna came up, her white clothes fluttering in the wind, and sat down with us. She looked gloomy and hard—I had never known before how hard her face could be. She began to talk. She said that it was perfectly ridiculous of Rudolf to jump off after her when she called for help, instead of pulling her in by the rope. The whole affair was utterly absurd, she said. . . . All this fuss for nothing . . . tiresome . . . it bored her . . . stupid. . . . A man ought to have more sense—presence of mind. She was vicious about it.

That evening she was gloomily silent. Rudolf lay on a couch by the fire and talked radiantly, though he was still very weak. You might say he babbled—and he sent warm, anxious glances at Lorna, to which she did not respond in the least. She was cold as a stone. She looked oppressed, extinguished. I had seen her look exactly that way when Ellery came into the room during the time just before they separated, as though a wet blanket had been flung over her, as though she were suffering, panting for lack of air, as though she would die if she didn't get out of that!

VII

I was not at all surprised when, next morning, Lorna announced that she was going to town for a few days, on business—a conference with her lawyer about the divorce. She telephoned for a carriage, packed like lightning and disappeared in a whirl, waving smiling good-byes. She hoped we would all go on exactly as we were till she came back.

"She will never come back," said Jeremy to me.

"What do you mean?" I asked, startled.

"I told you," he said. "Lorna is romantic—she likes lots of glamour! She doesn't like human, fallible, clumsy people. . . . Rudolf was stupid. She couldn't get over seeing him like that!"

"Oh—impossible!" I said. "You mean for a thing like that she'd break off—"

"You don't know Lorna. When she breaks, she breaks—and it's all off. I don't mean this incident caused it, exactly—it was the sign, that's all. She'd had enough. She's really drowned him, you see—finished him. If he chose to come to life afterward, it wasn't *her* fault—and none of her business!"

"Jeremy!"

"Well—you'll see!"

"And Rudolf—she's just *left* him here? Just left him—like that?"

"Yes—just like that."

"First Ellery, and now this boy—it's outrageous!" I burst out. "You can't treat people like that—I don't believe it!"

"Well—you'll see," said Jeremy again. "But of course," he added slowly, "there's just a chance that she'll have trouble with Rudolf. He isn't so meek, you know."

"I hope she *does* have trouble," I remarked.

"Well—I don't know," said Jeremy ominously.

But now Rudolf seemed very happy. He lay about in the house, on the sand, recovering from his weakness and bruises, relaxed and social. For the first time he talked to me—there was no one else, Jeremy rather avoiding him. And he evidently wanted to talk—he seemed rather pleased to have Lorna away, so that he might talk about her. He was totally changed in manner. All the bumptiousness seemed to have been shocked or drowned out of him, for the time being at least. He seemed to have grown up suddenly. That wrestle with death had an extraordinary effect upon him.

"Do you know," he said naïvely, "it's the first time I ever came up against something that I couldn't get the better of. At first I thought I could do it all right. I thought I'd just pull Lorna out, I wasn't afraid of the old undertow. I tell you it was very strange to feel it get hold of me—in spite of all I could do, to feel it had actually got me. I was horribly scared for a while, I fought like the devil, I didn't want to die. It seemed awfully absurd to die like that, with all I had to do—and it hurt. . . . But then I forgot about that and didn't seem to struggle any more—and it was only strange and wonderful—*I* wasn't there any more, only something marvellous happening without me, not happening *to* me, but as if I was part of what was happening somehow. It was a strange light, free, feeling, as if I'd got rid of myself."

He crossed his arms under his head and stared reflectively up at the sky.

"I don't think I'll ever be afraid of death again," he said. "I *have* been afraid of it—and of other things, too. Lots of other things."

Here he glanced at me, with an air of confessing a secret.

"I've often been afraid that I wasn't an artist after all—I mean, a great artist! Of course, I know I have some talent and I can do things easily—but that's not the real thing. If I can't be the real thing I don't want to be anything at all—"

He scowled, and after a moment went on:

"Then it seemed to me that things—people—were always trying to interfere with me, get hold of me. I've always been afraid that something would get me and prevent me from doing my work—so I've held everything off, as much as I could—"

So this was what was back of that superb bravado!

"—I wouldn't tell you this," he said, "if I didn't feel differently about it now. . . . But I think I've been mistaken—in always being on my guard—or at any rate something has got past my guard now and I can't help that either—whether it's for good or evil. But I feel it's for good—I'm not afraid of life as much as I was, and it seems more wonderful—"

His face kindled, and he burst out warmly:

"After all, art isn't the only thing! I think it's the greatest, I still think that, but one must live, too! . . . Art is the essence of life, but it must be distilled out of life, and before it can come we must live!"

I assented to this, looking at his radiant abstracted face. Then he began to talk about Lorna.

"I was only a boy when I met her—I didn't know anything really about life! I'd made up my mind that women and all that sort of thing ought to be kept separate from one's real life, that they ought to be only an amusement and not taken seriously. I hated the idea of being tied up with anybody. . . ."

He was silent for a moment and seemed to look back on this distant past with indulgent pity.

"But now I know," he pursued, "that I can't get on without her. She's a wonderful woman. She's spoiled me for anybody else—there's nobody like her. Don't you think she's wonderful?"

"Yes—but dangerous, perhaps," I said cautiously.

"Well, perhaps—but how do you mean?"

"Why, she's—changeable."

"Well, but you know she's very fond of me," said Rudolf simply. "I don't think she's ever been very fond of anyone else. And so I think, when she gets her divorce, we had better be married."

"Does she think so, too?"

"Yes, that's been her idea. At first I didn't much like the idea of being married. But now I know I shall never want to leave her—in fact, I *couldn't*, I couldn't get on without her. I suppose we shall quarrel sometimes—and I hate quarrelling, it upsets me. . . . She's rather tyrannical, you know—wants everything her own way. But—well, you have to take the bitter with the sweet, you know. Anyhow, I can't help it. I love her, and that's all there is to it. When do you think she'll be back?"

I didn't know. A horrid pang smote me as I looked at him and thought of Jeremy's words, "She'll never come back."

There was no mistaking Rudolf's sincerity. She had roused what depth of feeling he had. And he was so perfectly sure of her! Not with his former arrogance and carelessness—he seemed now almost humble, sobered—but yet there was a radiance about him, an emotion that transformed him, as though he were looking out into a new life and fully accepting its possibilities. I had an impulse to warn him. But I had nothing definite to say—only a feeling of danger ahead. And his course was set now—no one could keep him off the rocks. . . .

Brief notes came from Lorna. She had started, at a moment's notice, on a week's motoring trip into the mountains. She gave no address for that week. Rudolf looked blank at this news. Then came one thick letter for him. He took it up to his room to read—came down and dashed off by himself on the dunes.

VIII

We were now in late September. A cool, sparkling breath had passed over the land. Red leaves showed in the underbrush over the dunes, the beach-grass waved long, plumy spears, golden-rod flamed in the woods. The air was crystal-clear, the sea and sky more deeply blue. . . .

On this perfect beauty broke the first winter storm. It came roaring out of the north-west and filled the air with salt spray and sand. The sea turned black as ink, and came frothing up the side of the dune, higher and higher. Great waves rose and dashed upon it, scooping out the sand. The house just above this whirlpool of waters rocked and shivered as the wind beat solidly upon it. We shivered inside, for all the heat was furiously sucked up the chimney.

We were gathered that night close to the fire—Jeremy lying across the big couch; Rudolf on the hearthrug, smoking endless cigarettes, his fingers trembling, his face pallid and nervously twitching. We had all been silent.

"It's about time to go," said Jeremy suddenly, sitting up on the couch and rumpling his hair.

Rudolf didn't move—I could see his light eyes blazing sombrely under their flickering lids.

"Listen to the wind," said Jeremy.

It was like a battering-ram charging the house, easing up just enough to get a fresh purchase. The sand rattled like hail on the windows and sifted into the room. The sea roared and thundered.

"The summer's gone," said Jeremy. "We'd better be getting back to town—and all our comforts and luxuries—and leave all this. We don't belong here any longer. . . . Listen to the sea! Heavens! it seems as though the place might go any minute!"

Yes, we all seemed to be waiting for the crash. . . . In the wild turmoil of the night anything could happen. The dunes were "walking"—getting bodily up into the air and moving. . . . The patrols were alert all down this savage coast. On such nights ships come ashore, break to pieces on the boiling sand-bars, or, driven over them, crash on the beach. . . .

"Lorna won't come back," said Jeremy slowly.

Rudolf sat up, his eyes on Jeremy.

"How do you know she won't come back? Has she written to you—do you know anything about her—are you keeping anything from me?"

He sprang to his feet and glared at me and then at Jeremy again.

No, we both cried at once, she hadn't written, we didn't know where she was—

"Well, I'm going after her and I'll find her, wherever she is! Does she think she can leave me like this—planted down here in the sand—!"

He choked with rage at himself and at us, flaming at us as though we were accomplices.

"Rudolf! Didn't she write to you?" I cried.

"Oh, yes, she wrote! But I'm not going to take what she wrote! We've quarrelled before! Now she wants me to go away and not see her—well, I *will* see her—"

He flung away and stormed up and down the room, shouting against the noise of the gale.

"She'll have to come back! When she went she said she would—she'll have to! And she can go off motoring—leaving me here—"

He stopped suddenly, biting his lips, and came back to the fire, turning his back on us. Jeremy slid off the couch, looking shocked, and ebbed noiselessly out of the room. Rudolf already regretted his outburst. He muttered, in a shamed way:

"Well, it's just a mood of hers. . . . It will be all right. But Jeremy got on my nerves. What does *he* know about it? . . . You both looked as if you knew . . . You needn't look at me that way. . . . I should think I know more about my own affairs than you do!"

He made an effort to master his nervous irritation, walking about the room, casting sullen glances at me.

"I imagine you do," I agreed.

"Well, then, don't look so sympathetic. I don't want any sympathy!"

This was quite in his old rude manner, and he regarded me with the old hostility.

"I know you were always against me," he said abruptly.

"Against you?"

"Yes—with Lorna."

"Well, it wouldn't make any difference if I was."

"But why were you?"

"Not against you particularly," I said. "But I didn't think any good would come of her leaving Ellery."

"Why not?"

"Well, she married him and she should have stayed married."

"When they didn't get on together?"

"They should have got on together. Ellery was devoted to her."

"She wasn't to him."

"Exactly."

"I don't know what you mean by that," said Rudolf roughly.

"She can't be. She will never be to anyone, if you want my opinion."

"I don't see that that follows," growled Rudolf.

"'Youth, beauty, strength, are flowers but fading seen—
Love, duty, faith, are roots, and ever green,'"

I quoted to him, adding my sincere conviction:

"Either you have roots or you haven't. I don't believe Lorna has. Or they're so slight that a gust of wind breaks them. Like the things that grow here — lightly rooted in the sand."

Rudolf shook his head.

"That doesn't follow. A woman may be pretty mean to one man and good to another. Besides," he moved impatiently, "I don't care whether she's what you call good or not. I know she's fond of me, and she'll come back to me. . . . And I'll just wait for her," he added slowly. "She flew off, as I did—she was angry about something. But she'll come back. . . . Lord, what a storm! Was that a gun?"

We listened. In the uproar of the

wind and sea there were muffled sounds like gun-fire.

"We couldn't hear anything from the station—the wind's the other way," I said.

"It may be a ship on the bars—I'm going out to see—can't sleep anyhow in this racket," said Rudolf restlessly.

So he put on his oilskins and went out. I looked from the windows, but in the wild smother of the storm nothing was visible, no lights at sea or anywhere—only, rather felt than seen, the great black waves lifting themselves at the foot of the dune, with a vague blur for the foam on their crests. . . .

Toward morning he came back, drenched and exhausted. A lumber-schooner had struck on the bar and was breaking up. The life-savers hadn't tried to launch their boat, but had shot a life-line over the ship, and the five men of the crew had been brought ashore in the breeches-buoy.

"Great sight—wouldn't have missed it," he said hoarsely. "God, the sea is magnificent! And to see those fellows struggling against it—and winning out, too! . . . If one has to drown, though, it would be great to go out in a storm like this—not the way I tried to do it!"

I brewed him a hot drink and he went to bed, very cheerful and friendly.

IX

The next day when the gale had blown itself out, was inexpressibly beautiful. Earth and air were swept clean. The beach had been covered with a solid carpet of sea-weed, but that went out with the tide, and the sand was glistening white. Every foot-mark and wheel-track vanished from the dunes. They were pure and spotless, with only the little circles made by the beach-grass as it swept on the wind. Once more sea and sky were deep clear blue. But the sea still rolled great swells up to the foot of our dune, and a jagged rift had been cut in there below the house. And out on the bars we could see the wreck of the schooner, lying on its side, half-buried in the seas that foamed over it and were tearing it to pieces, carrying its splintered timbers towards the shore.

Rudolf came out just before noon, where Jeremy and I were sitting on the dune, looking at the wreck, and dropped down languidly beside us.

"I'm done up—caught cold last night," he said hoarsely.

He looked ill—pale and hollow-eyed. I could quite agree with Jeremy now that he was fragile. A day or so of anxiety and his expedition of the night before had quite prostrated him. Nothing could be less like a blond beast. His appearance of rude physical strength, I perceived, was a bluff, like his assumption of hardness. All this pretence was nothing but defensive armour, and behind it was the sensitive and frail creature that Jeremy had divined. Jeremy beside him, with all his shrinking manner, was hard as marble. He looked now at Rudolf in his aloof way, and said:

"You'd better keep quiet for a while. It isn't so long since you were fished out yourself—you don't need to go round rescuing other people just yet."

"Oh, I wasn't rescuing to any extent," murmured Rudolf.

"Well, you'd better look out for yourself. It would be a lot better for the five lumber-lubbers to drown than for you to get pneumonia."

"Not so sure," muttered Rudolf.

"Not that I care personally whether you do or not," Jeremy assured him airily. "It's only what you can do that I care about. I see you've got a chill. I think you'd better go back to bed and be dosed up with quinine and so forth."

"All right," said Rudolf indifferently. "Might as well be there as anywhere."

He lay for a few moments in the warm sun, shivering and blinking, then Jeremy got him up and led him indoors, and put him to bed wrapped in blankets, and gave him quinine and whisky. He was ill for several days, but nothing worse than bronchitis—yes, something worse, he was miserable about Lorna. He did not speak of her at first, in fact hardly spoke at all—but he inquired

about letters or telegrams and none came for him, and we had no news to give him. I told him I wanted to let Lorna know that he was ill, and asked if he had any address— He said suddenly:

"No. Never mind. I don't want you to tell her."

He wrapped himself in his forlornness and behaved like a forsaken child, now peevish and petulant, now with the strange patience and sweetness of a child. Fever and weakness made him content for a few days to keep still, but as he recovered he became more and more restless. And still Lorna did not write. She had simply vanished. Rudolf ceased to speak of her. He insisted one day on getting up and sat over the fire in the living-room, brooding in silence. He had changed a good deal. His face was thinner and marked by suffering. Doubt and suspense had cut deep into him. The look of careless youth was gone for ever.

That was a wonderful day outside—clear and warm, yet with a crisp hint of autumn in the air, deep and intense in colour. I coaxed Rudolf out into the sunlight, where he sat looking with a sick, unfriendly eye at the beauty of the sea. After long musing he said abruptly:

"I'm no good for work just now. I think I'd better go."

"Back to town, you mean?" I asked.

He nodded sullenly. Then after a time, looking away from me:

"Do you think when she went away she didn't mean to come back?"

"No, she told me she was coming back in a few days—I think she meant to."

"I don't," he said bitterly. "I think she meant to throw me over. But she needn't have run away. . . . Well, I'm tired of waiting here. I'll go and find her. She needn't think she can drop me like that."

There were ugly lines about his mouth, his eyes smouldered with anger.

"It was pretty cool, wasn't it?" he muttered.

"Well, you know you ran off and left her," I interposed.

"But I came back when she asked me to, didn't I?" he retorted. "More fool I—I might have stayed away then."

He brooded on this for a time, then burst out:

"She only wanted to show her power! . . . She didn't really want me back—but she couldn't stand my escaping! That's all she cares for—power. She's infernally cruel. As soon as she saw I really cared about her and needed her she didn't want me. I'd like to kill her."

"You'd better not make up your mind too quickly," I advised calmly. "This may be only a mood of hers—and if you let her alone she'll be apt to get over it sooner."

"You mean act as if I didn't care? . . . No, I can't play a game with her," he said dully.

Then we were called to lunch, and while we were at table the mail came, with, as luck would have it, a letter for me from Lorna. She wrote that she was busy in town, hiring and furnishing a place for the winter, that she hoped the rush would soon be over, and that she would see us soon and meantime hoped that we were all well—and she gave her address. Rudolf flushed up when this note was read, and then looked grey. After lunch he announced that he was leaving and went upstairs to pack. Jeremy went ostensibly to help him, but soon came down again, saying nervously:

"He's in a devil of a mood. Won't let me stay there. Do you think you could do anything—calm him down or anything?"

When I knocked at his door, however, Rudolf appeared quite calm and very polite, even smiling. He said he could manage all right, thanked me and conveyed with great courtesy his desire to be let alone. He maintained this demeanour until he left, and neither Jeremy nor I could break through it. At supper he was cool, talkative and gay. He asked if we had any messages for Lorna. He supposed we should soon

be coming up ourselves. He thanked us both for our kindness to him.

The nights were very cold now, however warm the days. That night, when Rudolf left us to drive over to the railroad, there was a cutting wind and a moon ghastly brilliant and hard. The beach-grass streamed like water in the wind, and beyond, the dunes lay blue-white under the moon, shrouded with a light veil-like mist—the restless sand that drove and whirled, stinging like fire. . . .

X

THAT eerie night of moon and icy wind, Rudolf's face as he went away, Jeremy's words about "trouble"—they made me nervous, and I sent a telegram to Lorna. I said that Rudolf had gone, and that I was thinking of going, too—unless she meant to return. Jeremy selfishly implored me to stay.

"It will be wonderful here this next month—the Indian summer," he urged. "Why go back to that dusty old town? And my work is going on rippingly—you wouldn't leave me here alone?"

"I would, unless Lorna comes back," I assured him. "It's bad enough to be living here in a house with a big hole under it, without having to worry about what may happen up there."

"Why, the house is safe enough, unless we have some more big storms—and then you could move into the studio, that's 'way out of danger," he argued. "And if you're worrying about Lorna, you needn't. I'd back Lorna to look out for herself any time."

"What did you mean then by saying she'd have trouble with Rudolf?" I demanded.

"I meant she'd have trouble getting rid of him, that's all. He isn't the violent sort, Rudolf isn't—not at all."

"What did you mean by saying there'd be a great big smash?"

"I meant *he'd* get smashed—not Lorna, oh, dear no!"

I wasn't convinced. But next day came a telegram from Lorna, saying that she was coming in a few days and please to wait for her.

"I thought you said she'd never come back," I reproached Jeremy.

"I meant, as long as Rudolf was here," he retorted. "She's running away from him, you see."

"Then he'll run after her?"

Jeremy shrugged his shoulders and looked melancholy.

"Poor old chap, poor old Rudolf," he mourned. "I'm afraid he's quite crazy. . . . If he'd only kept on running away from *her!* But to run *after* a woman—mad, quite mad!"

* * * * *

Then I had a letter from Ellery—the first for a long time. He said he wanted to see me and was coming down to the little fishing-village two miles across the dunes from us. Evidently he knew that Lorna was away, but he didn't want to come to the house; I was to meet him at the inn in the village the next day, or to write there if I couldn't come.

I drove over to meet him, and we lunched together. He looked jaded and old. He was not much past forty, but in the last year he had aged ten. At lunch we talked impersonally about his work and people we knew and things in general. He complained that he couldn't get anything to drink in the town and said he was going back that night—he had only come to see how I was getting on. What he really had come for appeared after we set out to walk. I meant to walk back the two miles, and he said he would like to come part way with me.

The first mile was through the woods—deep woods of oak, pine, maple—glorious now in their autumn colours. The narrow trail wound through their shade—the leaves were still thick—with splashes of the cool afternoon sunlight. There was a dreaming silence over everything—and for some time we, too, were silent. At last he spoke of Lorna, saying that he intended soon to go abroad, that the divorce suit would be undefended, and that he would like to be sure that she was going to be all right.

"I don't think she's been very kind to me," he said, switching at the underbrush with his stick. "But all the same I have a feeling for her—I'd rather she wouldn't come to harm. . . , I suppose she'll marry again," he said abruptly.

It was the first time he had ever indicated that he knew about Rudolf.

"I'm sure I don't know," was all I could say.

"You don't? Why, I thought—"

He was walking behind me in the narrow trail and I didn't like to turn and look at him.

"I thought you would know," he said blankly, after a moment.

"No. I thought for a time she would—but now I don't believe she will," I had to say.

He drew a deep breath—it was like a groan. Yes, I knew what he wanted—he wanted it all ended irrevocably, with absolute certainty. It would be best for him. If Lorna definitely replaced him with someone else, it would cut him free in his feeling. Certainly it would be best for him.

The path mounted upward and now ended suddenly against the sand. Up the face of the dune we climbed, sinking ankle-deep, the loose sand sliding down in a rush among the trees. On top of the dune we paused.

From that spot there was a broad outlook. Over the belt of woods we could see the blue harbour and the white houses of the village. Behind us stretched the dunes, marvellous in this sloping light that touched their sweeping surface so softly and cast their shadows so sharp and clear—and beyond them showed the dark-blue line of the open sea.

"It's beautiful here," said Ellery absently, when we had sat still for some time. "Shall you stay on very long?"

"I think not. Jeremy and I are here alone now, you know. Lorna is coming back—"

"Alone?" he interrupted.

"Yes, I imagine so—in fact, I'm sure. I don't know how long she'll want to stay."

He sighed. I saw that he wanted to question me, but couldn't bring himself to it. So I said:

"I think she doesn't care much for anyone, and never will. It isn't her nature. She would like to, she tries to—but she can't."

"She's lucky," said Ellery drily. "She'd better not try. It's all nonsense caring about people—except in the way of friendship," and he laid his hand on mine with a gentle caress.

"This place," I said quickly, "always reminds me of Lorna—it's like her."

I pointed where below us the woods and the dunes met—the woods pushing up into the sand, the sand sweeping down in a smooth curve like the falls of a mighty river. A struggle was going on there for life and death. The trees flung year by year seedlings into the sand, and the sand flowed down, choking the trees and leaving gaunt skeletons among the green.

"How like her?" he asked.

"She has so much vitality, but yet—there's something about her that deadens and destroys."

"Yes, she destroys—I suppose *I'm* pretty much of a wreck," he said.

"No, my dear! You'll get over it and live again!" I cried.

"I don't know. It doesn't matter much," he said carelessly, but he smiled at me and kissed my hand with a tender gesture.

Then we were silent, watching the sunset flooding over the dunes in rose-colour deepening to flaming gold. It was so still there, so beautiful—too beautiful . . .

When that light faded, we kissed one another good-bye, and he turned back into the woods, and I went on alone through the waste of sand in the twilight.

XI

Soon after this Lorna swooped down on us, very lively, full of amusing chatter about people she had seen and of plans for the winter. She blew into the quiet house like a fresh breeze—apparently perfectly cheerful and light-

hearted. Captain Kirby came over to welcome her and sat by the fire smoking his pipe and laughing at her talk. He considered her a queer but highly entertaining lady.

"We'll certainly miss you folks when you go," he assured us. "Never thought you'd stay so long, though—it's mighty lonely here. But there's no accountin' for tastes. We had a little excitement while you was gone—nothin' much."

He described the wreck briefly, and added with a humorous glance at me:

"I guess you got a taste of what winter's like here. That was quite a gale, wa'n't it? You'll be goin' soon?"

"Oh, it's beautiful here now—I don't think we'll go yet," said Lorna vaguely.

"Well—this place won't see *many* gales out, you know—I suppose you see what that one did?" inquired the Captain.

"Oh, yes—but I feel it will last a while longer," Lorna assured him.

"Why don't you pull it up on the dune? Seems an awful pity, after all you've done to it—"

"No," said Lorna positively, "I don't want to pull it up anywhere. I'm done with it. It can go any time it wants to."

"That so? . . . Well," said Captain Kirby, looking round the big room, "I suppose you'll take this stuff out when you go—"

"No, I shan't bother. I shall just shut it up," said Lorna crisply.

"That *so?*" He looked incredulously at her and she nodded, smiling.

"I don't want it any more. And I hate to have things hanging on after I'm done with them. I like a clean sweep!" and Lorna looked from under her eyelashes defiantly at Jeremy and me.

"You do? Clean sweep, hey? . . . Well, I suppose you can afford it," said Captain Kirby slowly, with some irony in his tone.

Lorna shrugged her shoulders and frowned.

"I don't want to see the place again or anything in it," she said with sudden harshness.

Unaccountably her mood had changed. She was silent now and overcast, and soon the Captain took his leave. She lay there on the big couch after he had gone, staring at the fire. Jeremy was making some drawings at the table by the lamp, and I took up a book. Suddenly Lorna turned upon us.

"You needn't act like this!" she cried. "I know what you think about me—but why don't you come out with it, instead of glooming at me like a couple of—undertakers?"

"If you know what we think, why come out with it?" said Jeremy blandly. "Least said, soonest mended."

"All right, if you want to drive me away from here," muttered Lorna. "I don't care to be treated like a criminal—"

"What have you done with Rudolf?" he inquired smoothly.

"I left him up in town," she said. "What else could I do?"

"Ah—what else?" echoed Jeremy. "Poor old Rudolf."

"Why aren't you sorry for *me?*" demanded Lorna gloomily. "Rudolf's young—he'll be all right. I think he's going to Spain. . . . But I'm not so young any more. And everything turns out wrong for me—everything I touch goes wrong somehow. I think you might have a little sympathy for *me*."

Her voice trembled, suggesting tears.

"My dear Lorna!" cried Jeremy, laying down his drawing. "It never occurred to me! You're so—er, so competent and—independent—and all that—"

"I'm a hard old thing, that's what you mean!" she interrupted. "You think I have no feeling—!"

"Well," began Jeremy nervously.

"But I have!" she cried. "I hate to have people unhappy—and do you think it doesn't hurt me to think they're unhappy on account of me? But I can't help it. . . . Why do people disappoint *me*—why are they never what I want? . . . I was as nice as I could be to Rudolf—I want to be friends with

him—but he won't be. So I had to leave him up there, that's all."

"Yes, yes," murmured Jeremy. "As you say, very unreasonable of him. But people *are* unreasonable, I've noticed. Even you, Lorna. You were a bit unreasonable yourself this summer, about Rudolf. When he ran away, for instance, and you had to have him back. . . . So you ought to understand it."

"Oh, yes," she admitted darkly.

"But, as somebody or other says," pursued Jeremy, "it may not be so hard to leave a person, but it's the deuce and all to be left! . . . It's too bad these things can't be arranged so that both parties leave off being unreasonable at the same time—"

"Yes," said Lorna sombrely.

"But they never are," ended Jeremy, taking up his drawing and eyeing it critically. "And hence these tears. Somebody always has to wear the willow."

"It's too bad it couldn't be *you*, Lorna, for a change," I suggested. "It would be a new sensation for you."

She looked fixedly at me and after a time said in a regretful tone:

"Yes. But I never can seem to manage it that way."

* * * * *

Jeremy and Lorna together always managed a certain effect of unreality. Whatever they touched upon took a queer look of moonshine. Jeremy was so remote in himself, he lived so completely in abstractions, that this seemed natural enough in him. But Lorna would meddle with the real world of human feelings and action—and yet she would hold it at a distance and treat it as though it were a composition of line and colour . . .

The peace in which we now spent a good many days seemed perfectly unreal. Storm had laid its rough hand upon us—and then apparently had vanished out of the world. One dreaming golden day followed another, with no cloud in the sky, except sometimes little feathery flights of cloudlets that only softened the deep blue. There was a crystal purity in the air, warmed by the sun to ineffable softness. The heat and languor of the summer past, the fierce rigor of the winter to come, seemed equally distant and forgotten. A charm, a magic spell of silence, rested unbroken there, only deepened by the long soft roll of the sea. . . . One marvellous day after another, unfolding from its faintly chill dawn into the caressing warmth of noon, sank by slow melting changes to a clear sunset—then lingering afterglow, twilight, a night glittering full of stars, dawn again.

* * * * *

At last one day a haze gathered over the sea and lay in a dark bank along the horizon. The roll of the surf lengthened and deepened, sinking to a lower key. A moaning sound began far-off, a faint wailing. Captain Kirby stepped over, to warn us of a storm.

We held a council at the door of the studio, where Lorna and Jeremy were working. Lorna, clay from head to foot, was deep in the construction of her first large model, and declared flatly she wouldn't go. Fifty feet behind and above the house, the studio was safe.

"We'll all move over here," Lorna decided quickly. "Put some mattresses upstairs in the loft and move our trunks over, and some food. The Captain can lend us a couple of men, I guess. I don't believe anything will happen—but if it does, it will be fun to watch."

"Fun, hey? You'll freeze in here," said the Captain.

"We've got plenty of wood for the stove. And of course if it gets too bad we can leave," said Lorna calmly. "How long do you think it will last?"

"The wind's shifting—it's pretty near east now. I expect we'll have a northeaster and about three days of it," said the Captain. "I guess maybe you won't care to stay it out."

"Well, we'll see. Anybody that wants to go, can go."

"I won't go *yet*," said Jeremy cautiously, casting a glance out to sea, where the fog-bank loomed. "But you

weren't here when we had the last storm, Lorna."

"All the more reason why I want to stay now. I like storms," she announced.

The Captain sent us over the men, and I packed the trunks for them to transport, and arranged the loft over the studio as a bedroom for Lorna and me. Jeremy had a hammock below. By afternoon, when this was done, the sky was overspread with dull haze, and the moaning of the wind in the distance had risen to a shrill whistle. The sea was heaving in long grey swells, with a hollow murmur, deep and ominous.

XII

In the grey dusk that closed down early, we saw the whole fishing-fleet drive by, making for harbour—a long line of dim shadows. We had not yet quite abandoned ship, we supped in the house and sat there afterwards by the fire listening to the piping of the wind. Lorna was at the window looking out into the blackness lit by flashes of foam as the waves rose and broke, nearer and nearer. A door slammed outside. We all jumped nervously—and in another moment Rudolf walked in, dripping wet and looking like a weary ghost. He had come over on foot from the village, he said in a bewildered way. He let us put him down by the fire, with a sweater in place of his wet coat and a drink of whisky. Lorna brought him the drink. She had turned quite white when he came in. She had nothing to say, and neither had Rudolf. It was obvious that we would have to leave them. With a reluctant glance at the fire Jeremy said:

"You can have my hammock, Rudolf, and I'll roll up in a blanket. Better come over before it gets too bad."

Rudolf nodded, blinking his eyes, which looked as though he hadn't slept for a week. He sat bent over before the fire, haggard and pallid. He seemed to have used the last ounce of his energy in getting to us, and to be near collapse. He did not look at us as we went out, but I saw his eyes on Lorna—pleading, beseeching, desperately forlorn.

We went in silence, putting on our coats, and were fairly blown up the slope with the rain beating on us in a solid sheet. Once inside the studio, Jeremy lit all the lamps we had and made up a roaring fire in the stove. Then we went about stopping up the cracks around the north windows where the rain beat in, and drying the floors upstairs and down. There was a leak in the roof, too, which couldn't be stopped, but we put a pail under it.

"Not very luxurious," said Jeremy with a shiver, when we had finally settled down by the stove. "I think we might as well have stayed over there to-night. We won't get the worst of it till to-morrow, when the sea gets up."

"Well, if you could sleep over there, I couldn't," I said. "This is bad enough."

"Don't think there'll be much sleep anywhere to-night," muttered Jeremy.

After a silence he broke out irritably:

"What possessed him to come down here like that? What—the devil—"

And after a moment:

"Yes, he's possessed, all right. . . . He looks as if he'd been ridden by the nightmare. . . . Oh, Lord!"

He got up and began tramping round the room. It looked desolate enough, with the big sheeted clay model and all the muss and litter, for he and Lorna both left everything where it dropped.

"Jeremy, sit down!" I said, when I had stood it as long as possible.

"Well, what shall we *do?*" he inquired desperately. "How about a game of chess?"

"Anything to keep you quiet," I said.

So he set up the chessmen—a big set of carved ivory, belonging to Lorna—and we started. Jeremy played quickly, I took a long time to each move—we were about evenly matched. The wind roared, the rain beat down, and now we could hear the crashing of the waves as they rose higher and higher.

"Pretty crazy of us to be here," muttered Jeremy once, as he waited for me to move.

"Speak for yourself and Lorna," I replied. "It's your doing. Check."

He bent his attention on the game, but it was too late now—I had him. We began another. He looked at his watch.

"An hour," he said fretfully. "They'd better be coming over."

We played that game out, and it took an hour and a half. I won again.

"I can't keep my mind on it," he said. "I'm going over to fetch them."

He stoked up the stove again, and went. In half an hour he came back, alone.

"Rudolf told me to get out, so I did," he explained. "Well, I guess they can do as they please now. I'm going to bed."

"You don't mind if I sit here by the fire?" I enquired.

"Not in the least," he assured me.

He got into his hammock and lay there smoking.

"What were they doing?" I asked.

"Talking. And Lorna was crying," he said curtly.

"Crying?"

"Yes. And she'd better cry—if that's all she can do."

He groaned impatiently and fell into silence. The wind howled over us, it seemed as though the waves were beating on the thin wooden walls. It was like being afloat, there was no feeling of solid earth under us, here on this spit of sand in the midst of the tempestuous sea.

If Lorna liked storms, she must be having her fill now, I thought. If she liked the spectacle of human suffering and the feeling of her own power, she must be having her fill. And I thought she did like it. There was a cruel streak in her. . . . The longing of a cold nature to feel. . . . What was vital emotion to others was to her mere sensation. . . . She would burn down a house to warm her hands. . . . Yes, she liked destruction. . . . When we cannot create, we must destroy, that is power. . . . Oh, the luxury of tears for another's woe! The æsthetic thrill of a tragedy working itself out before our eyes in a human soul! We can feel *that*, at least. . . .

Half asleep, in an uneasy dream that the walls were falling in upon us, I heard the crash, and sprang up. Lorna had just come in. She dropped her cloak and came to the fire, shivering, her hair blown in wet strings across her face. Jeremy sat up with a jerk.

"Hello! . . . Where's Rudolf?" he cried.

"I don't know—he wouldn't come," said Lorna shaking.

I wrapped her up in blankets and she sat and shivered in a nervous chill. She looked up at Jeremy putting on his coat and said:

"He isn't there. He's gone."

"Gone! Where's he gone—in this storm?"

"I don't know—he wouldn't come over here, he wouldn't stay there—he rushed off—"

"Rushed off—nice idea!" shouted Jeremy, plunging out of the door.

He didn't come back till dawn—and all that time Lorna simply sat and shivered, and wouldn't say a word. For once I think she had had enough. Jeremy had waited in the other house, thinking that Rudolf would return there, but he hadn't come.

We were storm-bound—and there we had to stay. Jeremy managed to struggle as far as the life-saving station, but he didn't find Rudolf there. That day the storm rose and rose till by night it had reached such a pitch of fury that it seemed we must be swept away.

Half-stupefied by the noise, we hardly felt the cold, though we crouched round the stove like three castaways, with barely a word for one another or a glance at the spectacle outside the blurred windows—the sea torn into great hills of black water and wild streaming foam. Nobody pretended to go to bed that night—it was

like a bombardment, with the scream of shells and the roar of heavy guns. Salt spray was forced in through a dozen places and the whole place was wet, but we didn't heed it. We kept up the fire and made coffee, and that was all. We were beaten down into indifference, insensibility—nothing mattered. . . . A second day and night passed somehow. And when Jeremy said hollowly, "The house is gone," we made no comment and did not even look.

XIII

When we could escape from our prison we hastily prepared to flee, separating by common consent, as people who had an experience together that they would like to forget.

Anxiety for Rudolf woke as soon as we could feel anything—that is, in Jeremy and me. Lorna did not seem anxious, she said impatiently, "He's all right!" She meant that he had not thrown himself into the sea nor been swept away in the wreck of the house. And, in fact, Rudolf had no such spectacular end. Certainly he survived bodily the events of that night. We found trace of him in the village—he had taken the early morning train, after perhaps wandering the whole night on the dunes. . . . Jeremy says, however, that he died in spirit and has never done anything since. It is true that his early promise has not been fulfilled, and that, even in his own estimation, he has no chance now of equalling El Greco. But had he ever the chance? If he had the divine fire could a woman's hand snuff it out? Jeremy and I disagree about that, and I see in him the tendency, no doubt inherited from Adam, to blame woman for man's weakness. . . .

Did I not blame Lorna, then, in the end? I cannot tell—she left me bewildered. I could see, in the short time before we parted, how quickly she came back to her usual self, how little trace apparently was left upon her. I saw that she would forget Rudolf as she had forgotten Ellery. . . . I saw, too, that she would easily charm someone else, as even then she made herself charming to Jeremy and me. . . . She planned to have a big studio in town, which Jeremy was to share, to go on with her modelling under his direction—she was eagerly interested in this, like a child. . . .

She had less apparent feeling than I had for the place where she and Rudolf had lived their brief summer of love, where she had cast him out with his wounded passion into the storm. She looked curiously at the blank space where not a sign of the house remained. The storm had scooped out a great hollow, the dune had slid bodily down into the sea. It looked like any other spot on that bleak lonely coast—a little wreckage on the beach, the sand blowing and drifting. . . . A house built upon sand. . . . The floods had prevailed against it, it had fallen, and no man could say now where that house stood.

But the great drifts and dunes of sand remained, as they have been and will be, eternal to our brief day of love and life. . . . The wind had sculptured a new outline, here cut the top off a dune, there swept one away and built it up on another spot. In these slight details it was different, but essentially, eternally the same. The great blank sweeps of sand, the towering, crumbling hills, the wonderful lights and silence, the incessant motion that yet changed nothing. . . .

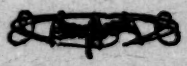
I shall never forget that country, and to me Lorna is part of it; I can never forget her either, though she pursues her way far from me. . . . Does she pursue or is she driven? Is she inert like the sand, but moved and moulded by something restless and resistless as the wind?

The sand and the wind together make that strange country of desolation and haunting colour—and to me they make Lorna. Creature of changing mood and impulse, of desire shifting as the wind, yet constant—constant desire for life, expressed in changing

forms—desire too keen perhaps, never to be satisfied, remorseless . . . but living!

I think of her superb vitality, irresistibly attracting those weaker in living force than herself, inevitably disappointed, passing on . . . to what I know not, nor whether there is compensation for the suffering of those sensitive souls that crossed her path. But I see that Lorna will remain, in any case, whoever else succumbs. Jeremy was right.

The sand is blown by the wind—but it is stone after all, and will outlast all softer substance.



THE REVOLT

By G. Vere Tyler

"THE prisoner to the bar!"

A moment later all eyes turned upon an emaciated woman who seemed to have glided rather than walked to the prisoner's rail.

At first glance there was nothing to arouse pity for this woman. Her manner was defiant, self-satisfied. She seemed a creature at peace with herself and the world, an object justified, a statue of splendid indifference.

Not an eye shifted.

What held them, apart from her manner, her attitude, was not—although she possessed it—beauty, but the calm heroism of her countenance that after the first defiant glance shone through its tragic sadness like the pale light of a silver moon shining through troubled clouds. Her eyes and brows were wonderful; her forehead was celestial; her mouth drooped; her figure was noticeably flabby.

Accused of the murder of her husband, not once had she denied the crime; not once had she offered a reason or made an explanation. She stood before the world a murderess as a fact stands a fact. There was no defence to work up. She demanded no defence. When her attorneys insisted that she speak, she said there was nothing to say. When asked to name the "other woman," she said there was no other woman. When her attorneys demanded that alienists find her insane, they found her perfectly sane.

The one or two witnesses who testified said they knew of no trouble, and that the man, powerful as an ox, never, to their knowledge, drank. They added that he was a good provider.

The prosecuting attorney, her lawyers, the witnesses, the judge, the jury, the spectators, were all curious.

She had murdered her husband. . . . She did not deny it. . . .

She was twenty-four, and had borne him seven children.

A CHARMING woman is one who listens with interest to a man's talk about himself. A charming man is one who listens with interest to a woman's talk about other women.

WIVES

By William Drayham

I

MRS. KIPPIN was impossible. Other men's wives are, as a matter of ethics, uninteresting enough. The divorce statistics will bear me out. The point has nothing to do with Mrs. Kippin. Isolate in a moral vacuum, the last surviving member of a once powerful sex, Mrs. Kippin would have been, as she was, uninteresting.

I find it difficult to convey Mrs. Kippin. Ordinarily I share the optimism of the male who holds no woman to be devoid of interest who is useless, unproductive and under seventy-two. But even a sturdier optimism than mine would have been unable to survive Mrs. Kippin. She lacked even the capacity for irritation which often redeems the most idiotic of the sex from utter blankness. What is worse she defied classification. I tried her in the bovine type without success. This is the worst type I have. It is reserved for women whose docile, half-witted femalisms remind me of featherbeds or cows. Mrs. Kippin failed to qualify.

It will be imagined from this sort of talk that Mrs. Kippin was some sort of monstrosity. This comes of getting excited over one's subject and trying to say a thing with emphasis. Mrs. Kippin was not a monstrosity, at least no more than other men's wives usually are. I would describe her in the regular way, but I have forgotten what she looked like. In fact, as I think of it, I doubt if I ever looked at her. This is untrue. I must have seen her. I was with her off and on for two years. On closer examination I am conscious of several impressions. In winter her nose turned red. In summer she puffed when she walked. In the spring she suffered from new shoes. She was a woman whose contours and manners suggested the gross caricature of a well-bred infant. Her silences were, if possible, more colourless than her words. Her figure was—I can think of no other way to identify it—accidental. She had the outlines of a woman and I somehow remember that she weighed 158 pounds.

I come now, agitato, to the plot. This utterly tedious, colourless blank of a woman was the wife of the most civilized, shrewd and accomplished friend I have ever known—Christopher Kippin. He was a man of many sophistications. He was a healthy, vigorous man of abundant experience, of enthusiastic cynicisms. He smoked a pipe, eschewed derbys and tie-pins, was head of a successful firm of architects, undomestic in his graver inclinations and a connoisseur of all that pertained to his senses. To my knowledge he had successfully survived four love affairs and evaded as many more.

I had never thought of Kippin as a marrying man. In some of our conversations antedating my disillusionment I had pointed out to him my reasons for the impression. He was too particular. He cared little for the idea of a home. He had seen too many women and known too many to develop a monomania on the subject. And, on the other hand, he had not reached a point of desiring to take refuge from the sex. Barring accidents or the advent of some dolichocephalic blond, his future seemed to me open and certain.

Thus when I heard that Kippin had

married I smiled in confused anticipation. I pictured to myself the new Mrs. Kippin. I had been out of touch with him for some three months, but our friendship had in no way sagged. I still credited him with the fine, discriminating virtues which had attracted me to him. I went out to call.

My first thought on entering the new Kippin household was that my friend had been blackmailed. My second was that he had lost his reason. I have already described Mrs. Kippin, or rather conveyed her. I feel, nevertheless, that the thing has been done imperfectly. For instance, I have neglected to say that she was a woman to whom it was impossible to talk. Even Kippin, airy conversationalist that he was, was unable to talk to her.

As for me, I sat by in a desperate silence. I would have been willing to discuss cookery, domestic items, to hold forth on the best sort of polish for furniture and what not. But I saw, or rather I felt, that she cared nothing about such things. Her lack of interest even in the uninteresting things of life was too complete to permit of any sort of discussion. Words in her presence seemed a distressing nuisance, conversation an impolite futility. As I say, Kippin himself couldn't talk to her. On that first evening it became apparent to me that Mrs. Kippin knew nothing, was nobody, that she was incapable of even the bovine variation of love, that she cared nothing about a home, that she was an utter, tedious and insufferable blank and that Kippin was head over heels in love with her.

I went away in a savage state of mind. The fact of Kippin marrying was sufficiently provoking. Provocation in such a matter is, I realize, nothing more than vanity and selfishness. Men dislike the proof of the fact that they are insufficient to each other—a proof which matrimony offers to the best of friends. And there are, of course, other more intricate reasons. But reconciling myself to the idea of Kippin marrying was one thing. Mrs. Kippin was another. I sought out Rigdon, who knew us both. We went to a café. We sat there and talked. I told him of Kippin's marriage. I repeated for him the evening I had spent with the newlyweds.

"Can you offer me any explanation?" I asked him. "Can you tell me how a man of Kippin's type, Kippin's brains, Kippin's fine, shrewd experience, could ever fasten upon such an absolute cypher of a woman as this Clara of his? I thought at first the poor fool had been held up, blackmailed. But nothing of the sort. He married her voluntarily, I tell you. My God, he courted her—it! When she hesitated he grew desperate and pleaded with her. Can you imagine such a thing! Kippin!"

My friend Rigdon shook his head and smiled.

"A man is naturally at his worst when he marries," he offered. "Undoubtedly Kippin had ideals."

"You mean that he was part blind?"

"Something of the sort," continued Rigdon. "He undoubtedly saw something in her," he added lamely.

"He doesn't and he didn't," I insisted. "Why, the fellow can't talk to her. She's never read a book in her life or had an idea since she was born. She's empty. If he'd married some domestic type you might explain it. A sudden yearn for home and all that. But she isn't domestic. She isn't anything, I tell you."

My bitterness seemed to amuse Rigdon. He repeated:

"A man is not accountable to any standards of reason when he marries."

"Yes, I can understand that. If Kippin had merely married her the thing would be intelligible. But he not only married her—he loves her. He hovers about her. And she sits about as limp physically and mentally as a boiled vegetable."

The affair continued to remain a mystery to me. Frequently I encountered Kippin alone. We sat and drank together and talked. He was the same Kippin. In fact he was a superior Kippin. He seemed possessed of an enthusiasm he had not had before. His con-

versation charmed me. His comments on current events and current celebrities, on current art were phrased with a Kippinesque drollery that sent both of us into laughter.

One evening a month or so after his marriage I suddenly made up my mind that I was an idiot. There was something in Mrs. Kippin that escaped my amateur powers of observation. If Kippin loved her there was some sane reason for it. He could have married almost any sort of a woman. He was well-to-do, amiable, virile, good-looking. And if, after all his experience in the matter, he had carefully selected Mrs. Kippin as a wife, there was, there must be, a definite, worthy quality to the creature. I became repentant. I busied myself hunting up Rigdon. I would take him along. Together we would visit the Kippins. I would be open-minded. Rigdon was a keen type. If he was able to discover anything I had missed I would accept it. If he said, "Why Mrs. Kippin is quite a charming woman. I'm surprised at your attitude," I would swallow it, apologize, and be content.

I found Rigdon in his rooms. He listened to my invitation with a frown. When I had finished he shook his head, painstakingly lighted his pipe and said:

"As a rule I don't like to make comments about other men's wives. But I've been out to Kippin's house. I've met Mrs. Kippin."

He drew a long breath.

"And of all the absolute blanks I've ever laid my two glittering eyes upon, she's the most complete. Why, I could hardly believe my own senses. There's no doubt about it. Kippin's gone loco. We sat around for some three hours. The woman doesn't know she's alive. She has absolutely no sex. She has absolutely no mind. During those three hours Kippin sat beside her without saying more than fifty words. He seemed lost in complete admiration of her. He couldn't take his eyes off her. And plain!"

"I know," I interrupted. "She's not even ugly. In fact, for the life of me, I can't recall what the devil she does look like."

We continued in this vein. I was somewhat relieved. Rigdon more than vindicated my judgment. After some hours of talk, however, we reached a praiseworthy conclusion. It would be wrong to abandon such a delightful companion as Kippin merely because of a marital lapse. It would be snobbish. We would continue our friendships. In the course of a year, when the bloom of the affair—whatever that idiotic thing was—wore off Kippin would be in need of friends. To sustain his faith in himself if nothing else. When he woke up and saw what a dolt he had taken to his bosom Kippin would indeed be in a bad way. For that reason we—Rigdon and I—would stand by him. We would take turns calling at his house. We would give a dinner in Rigdon's quarters for the couple. We'd do the thing up right. We parted on a fine Damonian note. Kippin was a great man, a genius, a creature of vast and subtle intelligence. He was the most brilliant man either of us had ever known. In deserting him the loss would be ours.

II

Rigdon and I lived up to our resolution. It was difficult. At times it seemed almost impossible. We called separately. We called together. We gave parties. We came to understand Mrs. Kippin, to call her Clara. If she had been colourless and tedious at first contact, she developed these attributes, increased and deepened and expanded them, until the mere thought of her was sufficient to enervate me for an afternoon.

It was the same with Rigdon. The mystery of Kippin's marriage occupied most of our conversation after the first year. We had passed the stage of sitting solemnly together and cursing it. We adventured into psychological labyrinths. We analysed Kippin and took Mrs. Kippin apart and put her together again. And invariably we concluded

with gestures of despair, with more drinks than were necessary and with a heightened determination to see Kippin, poor, deluded Kippin, through.

It was Rigdon who first called my attention to the unbelievable development in the affair. Kippin was jealous! Not so much of me as of him—Rigdon. But he entertained some slight suspicion toward me, at that. Rigdon, between bitter guffaws, told me the story.

"I met him on the street. You know, we haven't been out there for about a week.. I said, 'Hello, Kip. Going to be home to-night? I was thinking we might drop in.' He looked at me for a moment without saying a word. Then his face grew dark.

"'It seems to me you fellows are rather keen about dropping in.'

"I was amazed. The crude inhospitality of the man left me speechless. I looked at him, trying to think of something to say and figuring that he was drunk or insane or both. I finally said, 'Why, Kip, what's the idea?' And he became excited. 'You know what the idea is,' he cried. 'You know well enough. You two are supposed to be my friends.'

"Well, we went on jawing back and forth and I finally got it out of him. I was a snake in the grass crawling around Mrs. Kip. My God, give me a drink! Can you fancy! The man's sheerly insane. Kippin talking like that!"

Rigdon burst into a laugh and then became bitterly silent.

"And what about me?" I insisted.

"Oh, you're not so bad," he resumed after a pause. "You've got a few grains of decency in you. At the beginning you had some sinister and dishonourable intention. But your better self triumphed."

Rigdon was off again in his guffaws.

"But *me*," he blurted on. "I have been secretly wooing my best friend's wife! Yeah. Mrs. Kippin. I didn't answer the idiot. I should have, at that. I should have told him just what I thought of his lady. The insult to my character is bad enough. But the insult to my intelligence! The idea of wooing such a confounded half-witted cow of a woman as Mrs. Kip!"

We were silent. At length I said:

"This undoubtedly ends our friendship with Kippin. The thing is positively grotesque. For the life of me I can't understand Kippin, our Kippin, cutting up like that. Why the man's an utter imbecile!"

Rigdon nodded his head. We were sitting in his library.

"I did tell Kippin one thing," he said. "You know I'm going to be married this summer, in August."

I stared at him.

"It's been more or less of a secret," he went on hurriedly. "I wouldn't have let it out now if it hadn't been for that damned ass. I didn't want it to make any difference between *us*, you know."

"Well, my congratulations," I murmured asininely enough.

"Thanks," said Rigdon. "Wait till you see her."

He had grown suddenly enthusiastic.

"I've told her about you and when we're married you'll have a regular place to go to in the way of a friend's home."

"That's nice of you," I offered, coming out of my depression. Between the unexpected imbecility of Kippin and this new development I was beginning to feel morose.

"Well, anyway," went on Rigdon, smiling, "I told Kippin about it. It was the only thing I could think of to answer. It fetched him, too. He stammered and grew red and would have apologized, I'm sure, if I could have kept from laughing. As it was, he was off in a cloud of dust. The poor fellow undoubtedly feels that he's acted like an all-around drooling ass."

III

THE meetings between Rigdon and myself grew less frequent after this evening. As he confessed, his time was rather foolishly taken up. He was preparing for his marriage—whatever that meant. I presumed he was busy put-

ting in the final clinches to his courtship, and, after four efforts to locate him in his rooms, left him alone. As for Kippin, to present myself at his home after his asinine outburst, was impossible. Twice I passed him in the street and with a hurried nod ignored him.

The appearance of Rigdon in my office one day toward the last of August surprised me. For the moment I had difficulty in recognizing him. It was a rejuvenated, ecstatic Rigdon, smiling, boyish and full of incoherent joviality. He had come to bid me out to his new home, to thank me for the wedding gift and to assure me that our unpleasantness with Kippin was a thing of the past.

"He's coming out with Clara to-morrow night," he bleated. "And I want you to come, too. It'll be a reunion. Bring someone if you want."

He looked at me knowingly. I hastened to assure him that I would come—but alone. He became of a sudden confidential.

"Wait till you see Enid," he whispered. "She's just your type—quiet, quick, responsive. The sort of a woman you'll enjoy. I look forward to many evenings with all of us together, you know."

I shook Rigdon's hand. Next to Kippin he was my best friend and I valued his manner and thought the highest of him. We went out to celebrate. We grew reminiscent. We touched upon the inexplicable idiocy of our friend Kip and his jealousy.

Rigdon was magnanimous.

"Poor Kip," he said. "He'll wake up some day. The best thing we can do is stick by him. I saw him yesterday and had a good old-fashioned talk. He came to the ceremony, you know, he and Clara. Enid was amazed, as I told her she would be, at the sort of a woman he had married. But Kip himself has recovered—that is, from his jealousy."

Rigdon laughed.

"One look at Enid was enough."

Rigdon grated. His new enthusiasm, which I found it impossible to share, somehow offended me. The vanity and selfishness of the male again, I muttered to myself. I said aloud that I felt dubious about meeting Kippin. Rigdon laughed the fear away. I pointed out, likewise, the obvious inconvenience of having to meet Clara again and asked if my visit could not be made at some other date. Rigdon was obdurate. He blathered of reunions and fellowship and what not and I gave in.

IV

I WENT out to Rigdon's new home. A short, tubby creature with the face of a confused imbecile greeted me. She had large feet and an infantile face. She extended a moist plump hand and rested it in mine as if she had suddenly fallen asleep. It was Mrs. Rigdon. Rigdon himself appeared, beaming, immaculate, excited. The Kippins had already arrived. They were waiting dinner for me. Incorrigible bachelor that I was, I little knew the requirements of family life—punctuality, obedience, etc.

Kippin greeted me with effusive embarrassment. Mrs. Kippin's hand fell asleep in mine. She blinked her eyes and asked me if I had had a cold. The old status was evidently restored. I sat down and with a flourish drew forth a cigarette. Kippin and his wife sat on one divan. The Rigdons occupied two adjacent easy-chairs.

After the greetings the party seemed to have relapsed into a state of coma. I smoked in silence, presenting an appreciative smile to the scene and keeping my features attentively composed. We went in to dinner. Kippin seated his wife solicitously, patting her shoulder gently. Rigdon adjusted the chair for his own wife. I recall nothing further of the dinner. Conversation was impossible. Kippin and Rigdon beamed mysteriously at one another. Their wives exchanged broken comments on the price of food.

The depression which had come over me at the sight of Mrs. Rigdon became almost insufferable toward the close of this merry evening. The creature was

little short of an amazing duplicate of Mrs. Kippin, an uninteresting, tedious, soft-headed type. I stared my eyes out during the first half of the evening. I fought myself into a state of calm, of tolerance, of impartiality.

V.

THE matter rests there. I have visited the Rigdons a half dozen times. I find it impossible to escape my old friend's insistence. We sit and talk, that is, Rigdon talks. Mrs. Rigdon never talks. It would be impossible for her to finish two sentences without a nervous breakdown. On the whole she is worse than Mrs. Kippin. She has an offensive face. Mrs. Kippin's face is merely non-existent. Mrs. Rigdon's, I repeat, is offensive. In addition, she has a curious inertness about her. She defies classification. I have tried her in the bovine type. She falls short.

As I say, Rigdon talks. He is apparently the same Rigdon and yet he is not. He is a totally different Rigdon. There are moments when I think that both he and Kippin are stark, raving mad. There are moments when I inspect my own thought, seeking miserably for the germ of imbecility which is apparently latent in every male. Rigdon talks of his friend's wife—Clara Kippin. His observations are shrewd, his comments as succinctly couched as in the old days. She is, says Rigdon, the most distressing example of the stodgy, parasitical female he has ever encountered. Poor Kippin, he can't understand the thing! Rigdon's conversation invariably causes me to blush. I am ashamed to look at Mrs. Rigdon when he talks.

My visits to Kippin's home are also matters that I cannot honourably avoid. Kippin has forgiven Rigdon. More than that, he has grown to pity him.

"I've wanted to apologize for some time," he said laughingly the other night. "I suppose old Riggey told you. You'll understand such matters better when you're married yourself," he added, I thought somewhat lamely. "But it did seem odd to me for a time. I guess I must have lost my perspective. A man in love finds that rather a simple thing to do. But since Riggey's married we've patched it up. Poor Riggey. Can you, for the life of you, see how in God's name the fellow ever came to marry that woman?"

Mrs. Kippin smiles—if the thing can be called a smile—and Kippin turns toward her with a knowing ecstatic look in his eye.

VI

WE—Maybelle and I—have decided to invite the Rigdons and the Kippins to our wedding. I cannot forgo the opportunity to gloat and to show the little woman the sort of creatures my friends were unfortunate enough to marry.

THE success of a few men with women is outweighed by the success of most women with men.

THE worst enemy a man can have is an unhappy woman; happy women are never dangerous.

EVERY man has two wives: the woman he married, and the woman he thinks he married.

THE JURY

By Vennette Herron

I

AN aura of prosperous, padded, masculine comfort pervaded the club lounge, seeping through opening and shutting doors into the foyer, and streaming through slits between drawn velvet curtains out into the chill, lamp-pricked grey of the city street. Within, the corners of the enormous room were rounded by brown shadows, while its centre was filled with a warm, glowing, orange dusk, like that on the background of an old canvas, so that the men before the great stone fireplace seemed to sit in a bowl of light. Occasionally the flare of a falling log flamed the whole into momentary brightness, revealing spaces of amber-cream plaster, set between oak panellings and sending flickering gleams across the fronts of silver trophies and along the polished balustrades of the grand staircase, which stood opposite the main entrance.

There was a constant coming and going of restless seekers after diversion, for it was that vague, unsettled hour between the close of afternoon engagements and the dressing time for evening ones; but the semi-circle of leather-backed, cushiony armchairs about the fire presented an effectual barricade against intrusion and the five men, ensconced therein, carried on their conversation without interruption.

"Too bad about old Norris!"

Horace Greene introduced the subject, which occupied all of their minds, with the self-consciousness of a man performing an awkward duty.

"Damned unpleasant!" seconded his chum, Billy Brewster, a plump, fair, kindly young fellow, whose face, at the moment, resembled that of a distressed cherub.

By subdued murmurs and uncomfortable squirmings the remaining three registered similar sentiments. They were all well-bred, well-groomed, decent chaps, with no liking for the work in hand, but with a stern sense of its necessity and of their own obligations.

"Something's got to be done!"

As usual, it was Paul Stuyvesant who put the thing into words. He was somewhat older than the others—although not more than thirty-three at that—and, by virtue of his larger experience, their natural leader. A slim, chestnut-haired, olive-skinned *elegant* was Stuyvesant, with leanings toward the continental in the cut of his clothes and moustache. "We've held out against the fogies and stood by him longer than anyone else; but I should say that, this time, he's exceeded the limit."

"Well, rather!" acquiesced Kennedy, a convenient filler-in—also a satellite and not over successful imitator of Paul. "Did you hear that he actually—?"

"We've heard—and heard!" Harold Bagley, the fifth man, contributed his bit. "For heaven's sake, shut up and don't go over it again! I'm sick of the beastly mess!"

Bagley had gone to school with Phillip Norris—had been, indeed, his intimate, so long as such a thing was possible, and, even now, was hard hit by the talk about him, although agreeing with the others that action was called for.

"There's no doubt about it; he's turned out a plain rotter!" went on

Stuyvesant, putting down his emptied glass. "I think the situation demands another round. Billy, old top, you're nearest the bell."

"But what the devil can we do about it?" asked the unhappy cherub, stretching sidewise across his chair-arm, in an attempt to press the bell-button without rising.

There was a pause during which they all looked at Stuyvesant and awaited a decision. Eventually he gave it:

"Of course, there's no question about what the committee will do, when they meet on Friday—but he'd be spared that, if we could force him to resign in the meantime. That he lacks the good taste to do it on his own is incredible, but, nevertheless, apparent. There's nothing to be done by speaking to him again; we've all done our best there. If he comes here, we'll simply have to cut him."

"He'll stop short of that!" protested Bagley, running a nervous hand through his black hair.

"Lord knows!" amended Kennedy. "He's kept on his room and a lot of his things are still here—though he's been living heaven knows where the past month. But I'm told that he had the nerve to drop in, one evening last week. Of course his—er—latest wasn't known then."

After broaching the matter, Horace Greene had subsided into a musing silence. He had a carefully casual voice, correct, close-cropped hair, an ostentatiously brusque, military carriage and the dreaming grey eyes of a poet, habitually concealed beneath drooped lids. Now he spoke:

"I can't reconcile it all. Far be it from me to excuse Phil—he's impossible; and yet—look at his work! Have you seen the ceiling, since the scaffolding came down? It's—well, there's nothing to equal it—on this side, anyway."

"That's a fact;" Bagley took up the new note eagerly, "I don't pretend to be a connoisseur of painting, but I believe that the critics unite in calling the chapel a marvel—even those who claim that it's incomprehensible."

"Is it finished?" queried Billy, his face beaming into good-natured interest, like a plant bursting into bloom at a ray of sunshine.

"Not quite," replied Bagley, the best informed of the lot, where Norris' work was concerned. "It would be a calamity all round if anything happened to prevent his completing it; and he's so—er—so confoundedly temperamental—"

"He was a devil of a good fellow, once!" interrupted Kennedy regretfully. "It's a pity!"

He spoke with the hushed voice and wagging head of one mentioning the dead.

"I suppose," ventured Greene, with an elaborate air of abstract speculation, "that none of us knows what it feels like to be an artist—to have things like—like Phil's ceiling, for instance, locked up inside and clamouring for an outlet. The possession of such genius must give one a royal feeling of being above laws. I'm not sure but that we ought to make more allowance than we do for some difference in standard, where the difference in ability is so great. We've none of us immaculate records, as it is."

"It seems to me that I did see a column or two devoted to a little affair of Paul's in one of the recent Sunday papers," supplemented Billy, with a grin.

"You know well there's no comparison!" Stuyvesant slashed out angrily.

The opportune arrival of a steward, bearing drinks, averted a quarrel. There was a pause, while the conclave stirred and sipped; then the last speaker continued, with a resumption of his usual slightly supercilious drawl:

"You chaps are slashing like so many sentimental women. No one denies that Phil's a genius—the biggest artist this country has yet produced; but what the deuce has that to do with his vilely inartistic manner of comporting himself? We're none of us—er—beyond reproach, as Greene said, a

moment ago; but we all admit that there are certain things that can't be done and we don't do 'em. Phil absolutely refuses to accept our point of view, so he's got to stand alone. We'll have all the *mamans* in town down on us if we tolerate him any longer. I'm not suggesting that we put an end to his work, but only to his social activities. He'll have all the more time for painting, so brace up, all of you, and stop drivelling."

"Paul's right; his last escapade has put him outside the pale," echoed Kennedy, also in a drawl. Both his drink and his cigarette were exact duplicates of those Stuyvesant was enjoying and his manner was as nearly like that of his mentor as he could make it. "I don't see that his painting changes anything."

Thus the pendulum of their sympathies swung back and forth, while the five men talked and the winter day waned.

With the approach of the dinner-hour came fresh arrivals and an urgent demand for more light and, presently, the room was flooded with it. The intent little group around the fire blinked, rose, pushed aside its barrier of chairs and faced about. Just at that moment, as though the door had been a stage-entrance, and the sudden glare a footlight signal, a man entered, gathering up the attention of every occupant of the room by the mere act.

II

THE eyes, turned upon the newcomer, were antagonistic as drawn bayonets, but he braved them without flinching. With a somewhat unsteady swagger, he reached the centre of the room; then halted and stood, swaying a little as if from exhaustion, but facing the accusing line of eyes, with unabashed and debonair mockery in the depths of his own dark, smouldering ones. His was a haggardly handsome face, furrowed by dissipation, revolting, yet magnificently aloof and compelling. His clothing was, not deliberately but brazenly, unconventional and careless. A much-soiled, blue painter's blouse and a pair of disreputable, brown velveteen trousers showed between the opened flaps of a splendid sable-lined coat. Obviously he had come from work without thought of his appearance and the state of his grooming indicated that he had been distracted from such thoughts for some time past.

He was an intensely and shamelessly dramatic figure and it was, perhaps, that, more than anything else, which hardened the hearts of his judges, any one of whom would have submitted to torture, rather than participate in anything which might be named a scene. To the average male who makes a fetish of self-control, an expression of undisguised emotion is nothing short of a catastrophe and the men before him resented the abandon of Phillip Norris' attitude even more than they disapproved of the scandalously spectacular nature of his vices.

"Good evening, gentlemen," said Norris coolly. The man who painted so that popes and kings sought his services and behaved so that not one of his personal acquaintances would ask him to dinner, was never at a loss for words.

"I gather from your expressive countenances that you have read—and discussed—to-day's papers, and that I have not your unqualified approbation."

He waited a second; then:

"Has it ever occurred to any of you, I wonder, that a man's way of taking his pleasure is, after all, his own affair?" he concluded.

No one replied; they were all too astounded. The painter's presence, there, was a piece of impudence; his breach of form in speaking, without circumlocution, of the subject which he should have been anxious to avoid, his bold, offensive attack, where he should have appeared humbly defensive—all of this was far beyond their worst expectations.

Stuyvesant first found breath.

"Damned cad!" he pronounced dis-

tinctly, and turned his back upon the questioner.

With varying degrees of speed and certainty, every man present either slunk from the room or added his admonishing back to the line drawn up before the hearth, where stood the five friends, ramrod-straight, shoulder to shoulder, and with faces stiffened into masks of grim disgust—sublimely unconscious of the fact that their action had been as concerted and as true to type as that of a seasoned chorus.

The isolation of Norris, in the centre of the great room was complete. He held his post for a moment, with gallant, if unobserved bravado. It was the only incident of its kind and the most heart-breaking that had ever taken place in the fine, conservative old club, the doors of which had been kept open to the artist thus long by the combined and constant efforts of the coterie, which now washed its hands of him.

"Something tells me," Philip broke the silence at length, with an attempt at mock plaintiveness, "that you will not grieve to hear that I have come but for the purpose of removing a few valued belongings from the room which I formerly occupied—and for which I have always paid—and that my resignation goes in to-night."

There followed visible signs of relief and relaxing in the backs, but no one spoke or turned. Bagley, it is true, wriggled an impulsive shoulder, but, with a glance at his comrades, thought better of it and swung further toward the fire. It was all immensely impressive and quite in accordance with the club traditions. The cherubic Billy grew wide-eyed as a child under the strain; Horace Greene reached for a match with fingers which trembled, struck it and threw it down unused. The stillness of the huge room, ringed round with the monotonous drone of outside. every-day sounds, was hideous. Had they been women some of them would inevitably have sobbed or screamed. The moment was unendurable.

With feet which dragged scuffingly over thick-piled rugs and grated dully on borders of waxed wood, Phillip Norris crossed to the stairs and mounted the first short straight flight; there he wheeled and looked down. Suddenly he drew himself erect and called an imperative command:

"I say, you fellows, stop acting like well-trained asses and turn round! It won't injure you and I've got something to say."

Surprise shocked them into compliance; involuntarily all raised their eyes at the hail and irresistibly, thereafter, the man on the stairs held their fascinated attention.

With his unfailing instinct for the picturesque—a thing entirely detached from his mental processes—Norris had paused in the centre of the large, square landing, where the broad staircase divided, for the purpose of ascending, in two stately outward curving sweeps to the balcony, which encircled the lounge. At the back of the landing as elsewhere in that room the wall was decorated with panels of carved oak, separated by strips of cream-white, smoke-tinted plaster; so that Phillip, in his blue, gold-brown and dark fur, looked like a king of old upon a dais—or, one might have said, like a medieval monk upon a carven pulpit.

"I know I'm a disgrace to the regiment," he began flippantly, "and this is a very solemn occasion. You're all doing your duty and it's most painful to you—oh, I can see that; but I've something to tell you, before I get out for good. You all amuse yourselves pretty much as you like—I doubt if any of you lie awake nights fighting temptation—and, just now, you're all smug and self-satisfied because you've never wanted to amuse yourself as I do. I'll wager not one of you has ever considered what would happen if he did want to.

"Can you imagine how it would feel to loathe the taste of the things that most people like to eat and smoke and drink and to have a craving hunger for things which *les autres* don't like, or haven't tried, and have therefore declared unfit for consumption?

"Can you imagine what it would be to hate the clothes and conventions and sights and sounds that have been labelled beautiful, because the majority of people like 'em, and to love others that are called ugly, because most of the world knows nothing about 'em?

"Can you imagine what it would be to feel for ever on fire for a thrill big enough to lift you out of the rut of life—and then to find that you are absolutely unmoved by the stimulants that affect others and are exalted into clear vision and freedom from the ego by means that have been arbitrarily branded impossible by those who have never tried 'em?

"How much longer do you think you'd hold out against impossible desires, if you had them, than you do against the legitimate desires which you now have? If you wanted some kind of dope as badly as you do the whisky you're all hankering for now, how long do you think you'd wait before taking it? You don't even know what you really want because you've accepted the decisions of your ancestors, about most things, instead of experimenting and deciding for yourselves. Any man who differs from yourselves is inhuman and you're so damned complacent that you can't see the irony of the thought."

While Phillip Norris talked, replacing flippancy with fervour, as he went on, his auditors stood spellbound, gaping and helpless before a proceeding so entirely unprecedented.

Phillip continued rapidly:

"I didn't come here to deliver an harangue, but to get my things, as I said; but your stupidity irks me and I'd like to pierce the fog of your ignorance just once before I drop out. I might also mention the fact that none of you have positive knowledge as to the truth of the reports about me—but, since most of them are true, I won't go into that. Now imagine, on top of all the other suppositions, that you knew that there was some cosmic beauty struggling to express itself through you and that the only way you could unlock the channel of yourself was through intoxication of some sort—through a complete letting go of your own will; and the only way that you can intoxicate yourself to that extent, remember, is by doing something that—that others can't understand. What would you do, under such circumstances—what ought anyone to do? I'm not trying to excuse myself; I'm simply trying to show you that the only sin a man can commit is the act of calling another man's act sinning. It's that amazing presumption which makes all the woes and wars of the world."

The audience remained silent—not electrified into understanding, but dumbfounded and aghast at the supremely unusual. Greene alone took in the words, which hurtled against the others like balls against a wall.

Phillip had forgotten his individual listeners; he was hurling his words at the world.

"Let me tell you," he went on, "that you're not great when you control yourselves; exaltation comes only when you are controlled! You are quite proper and very powerful, in that nothing can hurt you; but you're only men, while I am a tool of the gods. There must be many of you to inhabit the earth, but some few, like me, to sing its songs. You can fight and die, if need be, but a poet can write a song to make a million men die singing. You think that the weakness of my body conquers me and I tell you that I give my body as a sacrifice to the God who holds me in his hand. Who are you, that you dare to pass judgment on a tool of the gods—you who have never been used by anything greater than yourselves—you who have never known emotion? Do you think you have? Listen! If you can pause to think, to weigh and consider—if you are filled with cynical mirth, or with any form of remorse, over an intrigue—it is nothing! But if you have no thought of right or wrong or time or earth, or aught except a woman; and if, long afterward, you can laugh, in the midst of pain, for joy at a remembrance—that is a great passion! If you would

murder your father and your mother and put the world in torment, if need were, to give gladness to your beloved —it is love! And if you would give your body and soul to be consumed in the white fire of inspiration—you are —an artist! If anything should happen to me, I wonder which of *you* would finish my chapel!"

The hearers were pulled, as by a magnet, closer and closer toward the foot of the stairs; they moved slowly and stolidly together, as though each felt the need of support. Still none of them spoke.

Suddenly Phillip Norris threw back his great fur coat, shook it from his shoulders and dropped the garment to the floor behind him; then he plunged his hands into the pockets of his blouse. After a brief search, he drew forth a stub of charcoal crayon and, with two strides set its point against the central panel of light plaster, at the back of the landing.

This was desecration; a steward, hovering far in the background, started forward with an exclamation of horror, but was waved away by the absorbed group of men, now in thrall to curiosity and suspense.

And then, before their eyes, Phillip Norris—haggard, seedy, the brilliant wreck of a man and incarnation of an artist—drew, with quick, impressionistic strokes, an angel—a beautiful guardian which brooded lovingly over the great room and its occupants. There were the fewest possible lines in the picture; it seemed as though it must break and melt away—a blown bubble of inspiration. And yet—there it was! There was no time for creation; it was the lifting of a veil from something already existent.

The drawing took but a few moments; then Phillip turned quietly.

"There," he challenged, with hand uplifted, "there stands my angel! Come up here, some of you decent chaps, *and put yours beside her!*"

He searched the faces, upturned to the sketch on the wall; there was in them gasping admiration, even vestige of dawning comprehension, but, behind that, even while they muttered their marvelling, was stubborn, stolid resistance. Norris saw it all—their pity and their recognition for him and their fixed allegiance to the thing which they themselves represented. His own face was sombrely inscrutable.

"I planned a later and less public conclusion," he mused, as if to himself, "but I suppose I always knew that it would come to this. Why delay—now sentence has been passed?"

He thrust his right hand into his trousers pocket.

"Ah, you, who are so satisfied with shadows"; he addressed the bewildered group below him, "I know I'm right and you're all wrong—but there are so damned many more of you!"

Norris withdrew his hand from his pocket and the hand held a revolver.

"I've been expecting an emergency and I'm ready for it, you see."

"Phil—you fool!" shouted Bagley in a tone of pleading, while the others started, simultaneously, up the steps.

"Stand back!" ordered the artist and trained his weapon upon them.

They stood in confused uncertainty.

"Gentlemen of the jury," continued Norris, with a courtly bow, "I accept your verdict. But—" the last words came softly and slowly—"I do wonder —who'll—finish my chapel?"

Before they could catch his meaning he set the muzzle of the gun to his own temple and pulled the trigger.

"My God!" sobbed Billy Brewster, as he was borne along in the upward rush.

The smoke rolled away and they found Norris lying prostrate, like a worshipper, upon a heap of blood-stained fur, at the feet of his angel.

III

THAT angel, now, is covered with a sheet of glass and members point to it proudly while showing guests over the club. "Yes," they say, "that's the work of the great Norris. Poor fellow! He died here, you know. Yes; he was still very young. Real genius rarely lives long. I wonder why?"

THE RAIN ON THE ROOF

By Elizabeth Irons Folsom

I

IT is all because of the rain on the roof. I had heard it through the night, pattering below my window, and, for the life of me, I could not sleep, for I was crowded full of memories of another roof upon which the rain had pattered. The other had been tin and the patter was louder; the other had been mine and mine the damage if the water rusted it.

The roof below me now is the glass top of Mr. Fontaine's conservatory, and it is nothing to me if the water leaks through. But, all night, I kept listening—thinking of that other roof and what it had covered. That is the way women are.

So, when I got up this morning, I looked old to myself in the mirror, and it was no time to look old, for I was on exhibition. I was a guest for the first time in Mrs. Fontaine's great home and a guest of interest, because I was to marry her only son.

I dressed slowly and thought about this only son of hers. It was pleasant to be loved by him; it was pleasant to feel a future quite assured and to know I could have a conservatory of my own, all the rest of my life—not that I care especially about an artificial thing like that, but because of its part in the patter that had kept me awake and in those memories that stood around and watched me as I dressed.

The rain had stopped and there were breaking clouds in the west. So I put on the short white skirt I had brought that we might walk over the place together as he had planned. He liked my plain clothes; he said they gave me an air different—but every man says such things in certain conditions of mind. But the skirt could not convey to Mrs. Fontaine that I was nervous about my visit to her, or that I was trying to dress up to her environment.

I looked much less pretty than usual, so I let my hair wave as it would. When a woman looks tired and shows her age, she does not help the situation by fussing with herself. I had felt just so and dressed just so, for a walk with him the first morning after we were engaged. I had been awake all that previous night, too, and when I met him he had quoted something like this:

"You are tired, I know;
But you're loveliest so."

I had thought that rather nice. Somehow, it seemed silly this morning. Very silly.

He met me at the foot of the stairs. An Englishman looks awfully well in his country morning togs, and I felt warmer and distinctly better when he took my hand and led me to the breakfast-room—all glass, round table set where the sun should have been, big silver service, jars of jam and brown-yellow bacon just coming in.

Mrs. Fontaine was gracious. She looked a thousand years old in her beruffled, laced and ribboned negligée—there was more lace on it than on my entire wardrobe.

It is astonishing how much the English eat at breakfast, and so much sweet stuff like jams. I wasn't hungry and she said:

"We must teach Therese to eat as we do." It was a lovely surface smile she gave me, but back of it there was—not dislike, maybe disappointment, maybe

just emptiness. I thought it was just emptiness.

The London papers were there and he read from them. She knew so much more about war conditions, about all public things, than I did. She was so acutely interested. For my part, I had taken the war personally, not generally. I had watched—not every day, but too often—the movements of a certain regiment that had seen much service.

After breakfast she said:

"Go on about your affairs, Gilbert, and let me have a talk with Therese. We must get to know each other."

Again the surface smile.

I was dashed. To talk to a be-ruffled prospective mother-in-law immediately following breakfast would dash any woman.

She took me into an alcove off the breakfast-room and put me into one of the big chairs. She sat opposite with her lap full of the morning papers.

"My dear," she said, "we both have Gilbert's welfare at heart, haven't we?"

"Oh, I am sure so," I said, almost quickly enough.

"And to serve him best, as his wife and mother should, we must know and love each other, my dear."

"Oh, yes, indeed," I enthused.

"We will try and understand each other and shape all we do toward his happiness."

"Oh, yes, indeed," I repeated.

I wondered if she thought I was imbecile. She may have. The emptiness back of her smile was such a far-reaching one I could not see to its end.

"To do this, my dear, I want to know you well. He has told only of your attractions." Her very good china teeth showed. I thought how much her dentist must have charged her for them.

"So would you mind telling me a little about yourself, my dear Therese?"

"I am glad to tell you anything you like to know."

I hoped I was not blurting out my words. I tried for the thick slowness of her speech and to curb the crisp clearness of mine.

"I am thirty-one years old, Mrs. Fontaine."

"Just Gilbert's age," she said.

Out of the bareness back of the smile I caught the suggestion that it was unfortunate I could not have managed to be younger.

"I was married when I was sixteen," I said.

"Yes, my dear." Perhaps that bareness was to be occupied after all. Surely there were emotions in her three words.

"It—it was not happy. That is—it—it grew to be not happy. So we were—legally separated. We disagreed about so many things."

I stopped. It was difficult. She waited politely and then prompted me.

"Over what kind of things, if you don't mind, Therese?"

"Oh—oh—most things." I was quivering inside.

"Can you remember some of them? It would be wise to know if they were temperamental faults, that might arise again."

"Arise again," I murmured. "Oh, they can't arise again. I have not seen him for six years. I will never see him again."

"I mean, arise in another marriage." There was distinct chilliness in her voice. "Might arise during the married life of you and Gilbert."

I submit it to anyone! Was the expression, "the married life of you and Gilbert," calculated to give a bride-elect happy thrills?

Just then the clouds which had gathered again, broke into spatters against the panes and back bounded my memory to the long night of listening; back farther to the patter on a roof that I knew long ago, before the temperamental faults had developed, when life was love and love was life. I caught my breath hard. I heard it. So did she. Perhaps she took it for a love sigh, for the smile came again and she said:

"I am willing to believe, Therese, that the faults were not yours."

The patter of the rain. A voice that sang off key but gaily, arms that caught

me and that I had not thought about since I had made up my mind to marry Gilbert Fontaine. But the rain on the roof . . .

"Much of it was my fault," I said, low in my throat.

She looked at me curiously.

"You were much in love, I suppose."

"Yes."

"As you understood love at your age. The love you have now you will find is much more reasonable."

Yes, Mrs. Fontaine, much more reasonable—but I did not say it aloud.

"Do you know where he is now?" she persisted.

"At the front." And then, "Oh, Mrs. Fontaine, must we talk about him?"

The china teeth were out of sight. Surely her upper lip was very long.

"Certainly not, if you do not wish it. I would not force your confidence."

I did not know quite what to say to that, so I said nothing. I looked off through the rain into the shrubbery and down a gravelled drive that lost itself in a close-clipped hedge. I had a glimpse of Gilbert crossing in the rain to somewhere, presumably stables. I saw him clearly: he was big and tall—dependable. Not charming, certainly not charming, but very safe and sane for a husband.

I tried to smile.

"It was all over long before I met—your son. I had very little money, you know, and was teaching the Brent children when I met him. I appreciate him very much. I—I want to make him happy and—oh, Mrs. Fontaine, I want to be happy, too."

II

She had taken up the papers and she looked at me over the top of her spectacles. Millions of tiny wrinkles I had not seen before criss-crossed her forehead and cheeks.

I did not really catch what she said then, for I was thinking fast and hard, that some day I would have such wrinkles, maybe some such ribbon and lace ends to cover the ugliness of me, that I would be right here in the "family" home, with the conservatory and the brown-yellow bacon and Gilbert going to the stables and coming in from the stables—and then life would be about over and what would I have had? Dear God! Dear God! Is that what life is? Is that what You meant it to be?

Then I saw her offering me a part of the paper and I took it and sat safely behind it. Of course I must read the papers and be informed so that Gilbert could correct me. In order to be suitably corrected I must have a wrong opinion. No opinions at all did not make a wife.

I was angry with the rain on the roof. Since my engagement I had blessed my good fortune every day. The world is not too gentle to a woman meeting it alone. Behind Gilbert was a good place to live in peace and security. That was what life was for—to be secure. I had been sure of it until the rain pattered the roof. I must be sure again.

I crossed my knees, looked at the curve of my white shoe, gloated that it was American made, and spread out the paper to look at it just as if I had reached already the years when the wrinkles were criss-crossing. I said, very low to myself:

"Be sane. Be safe, Therese."

I settled to read. The day's casualty list was before me. I often read it, shrinking as millions of other women did. I read it furtively then; ran my eyes down the columns—columns—for the new drive was on.

"Stephen Pitcairn — mortally wounded."

I stared at it. "Stephen Pitcairn—mortally wounded."

Then I folded the paper and pressed it close to me and put my arms over it. I looked across at a wrinkled person sitting there, with more newspaper in her hands.

The person looked at me and said something.

I tried to answer, but my throat was closed.

The door opened and Gilbert came in and came straight across the room to me. I fenced him away with one arm and held the paper tight with the other.

"My husband is killed."

"Your—what?"

"My husband — Steve — mortally wounded—the paper says so— What is mortally wounded, Gilbert?"

He stepped back from me.

"What do you mean? Look here, what do you mean by this?"

I could not say what I meant. I did not know what I meant. I only knew that I pushed them both away. I put my face against the panels of the door, I felt my way about that room with my face touching the walls, the doors, the window glass—round and round. I don't think I cried. But I know I said, over and over, "Steve—Steve—mortally—"

Gilbert stopped me and I looked at him for the first time.

"What is all this? Are you making this fuss for another man, when you are going to be my wife?"

Then I said, "His. His wife. As long as I live—his."

I laid my head, then, on something hard and, after a long time, Gilbert had gone away and the wrinkled person who was Mrs. Fontaine then, was saying:

"Therese, you must be sensible. What do you want to do?"

"I want to go to him."

"He is in France"

"Then I want to let him know—quick, quick, before he dies. Wherever he is, they will get a message to him, won't they, before he dies?"

"What do you want to say?" Even at that moment I heard the dryness in her voice.

"I want to say—to say—I want to say, 'Let me come to you and stay with you for ever.' Will he know by that that I love him?"

"I should think he would."

"Can it go like that, in a message—a telegram?"

"Yes. But where? You do not know where he is."

But I knew his London address—ours—where the rain had pattered. I knew he had kept the house. I thought from there, he might be reached. She wrote my message for me. I know now that she did it with alacrity. She telephoned it to the town.

"In an hour," she said, "it will reach that address. Perhaps they know where he is."

Then she asked me if I wanted to go to my room and called me "Mrs. Pitcairn." She left me alone and there was the rain again on the roof . . . patter, patter, the torturing patter.

My door opened and Gilbert came in, very erect and stern as befitted a nearly titled Englishman who has suffered at the hands of someone.

"Let me see the paper you have, will you?" he said.

It was crumpled and wet from my hands. I handed it to him, still folded.

I heard him rustle it as I looked away. He turned and returned it. Then he said:

"I don't find it."

The agony of his stupidity!

"Half way down the second column of casualties."

"It is not here."

I did not answer nor move.

He came over to where I stood.

"Look for yourself," he said. "His name is not here!"

I put out a finger to point to the spot blazoned in my sight.

. . . *The name was not there!*

I ran down the list—no!

I grasped the paper in both hands and read each name separately.

"There is a Stephen Pierce," he said. "The nearest to it."

I clung to the back of a chair. The blood seemed to rush into my heart and crowd it.

"You imagined it was there. You thought you saw it. Because your mind was so full of him, you fancied you saw his name."

I only looked at him. What twist of mind had made that possible?

"I thought it was queer," he said curtly. "Because I had seen, but a few

days ago, that Captain Pitcairn was at his home in London on leave."

Home! At the little house on upper Baker Street where we had lived. The little house where the tin roof is.

I opened my lips to take a long breath.

And where the telegram has gone—in an hour, she had said, it would be delivered there. It is an hour now! He knew now that I wanted him!

I did not hear Gilbert when he went out, for I was thinking what I should do if he did not want me, if he had found someone else, as I so nearly had.

He would answer soon. Could I wait, when the drops pattered and hit my heart—each one? If they would only stop I could wait. . . .

But the man off there, reading my message, was just Steve . . . from him there could be nothing to dread!

I think he will want me.

I know he will want me.

So let it rain!

THE SUNDAY MORNING SLEEP MACHINE

By Manchester Willdy

I WAS resting in the shade of the cypress hedge that surrounds the sanatorium when suddenly a sharply thrown stone caught me squarely upon the nose. A moment later the thrower of the missile appeared, crawling upon his hands and knees through the shrubbery. He smiled pleasantly, while I rubbed the swelling portion.

"You will pardon me, but you wear clocked hose," he said, as if in explanation; then he began to laugh in a treble cackle. "Again I must apologize for I observe that you are not an inmate of our cheerful, homelike Sanatorium for Unsound Minds."

I admitted with some hostility that I was not.

"Then naturally you do not understand my little oddities, so I will explain. I am insane," he confided, peering through the shrubbery toward the building. "In fact, I am violent," he further consoled, "and I am never without a guard; only this morning," he chuckled, "I left him locked in the bath-room with a towel about his neck. Oh, I am not as puny as I look," he boasted, and reaching for my cane he snapped it into small fragments with his bony fists. "I shall have," he continued, "probably a quarter of an hour of leisure before I am missed and I shall tell you why I am here."

Sullenly reconciled to listening to the ravings of a madman, I lighted a cigarette and waited.

"I see," he was quick to observe, "that you anticipate a boring and probably unsound narrative. But when I have finished perhaps you will be convinced otherwise and sympathize."

He fixed his eyes upon my socks and sat so for some time.

Then, "Say, did you ever try to sleep on Sunday morning?" he asked so suddenly that I jumped.

"But of course you have," he continued, "for everyone has, and you are familiar with the noises; not the monotonous everlasting clamour that we become accustomed to eventually, but the insipid little Sunday morning noises that drive people to distraction:

slamming screen doors, flies buzzing, the Sunday dinner chicken playing tag frantically with the cook for its life, the kids on the sleeping porch next door vocalizing with variations, a Caruso record being rendered on a five-dollar and fifty-nine cent phonograph, the amateur boxers upstairs—but oh, you know them all."

He peered through the shrubbery, then resumed his tale. "It was after a number of years of such things that I realized what a benefit to humanity it would be if I could reduce this nagging torture. And it was *then* I invented my Squibb Noise Absorber!

"It took years of starving and labour, you may know, but when after three years it was completed I realized that my invention was the greatest thing of the age. Placed in the windows of a room it would absorb any ordinary noise, leaving the interior as silent as the grave. I was nearly mad with delight, realizing that my fortune was an assured thing; I had always been a poor man. Yet I felt that my greatest achievement was to be in the realization of my own Sunday morning rest. Can you share my elation, when on Saturday night I stretched myself between the cool sheets, for my well-earned rest, to fall asleep and sleep—until I awoke?"

He broke off and remained silent so long that I began to fear lest I was to hear no more of the strange tale.

"Then, after all of your labouring, the invention proved unsuccessful?" I inquired sympathetically.

"On the contrary, it was faultless!" he returned.

"Or perhaps the overwork, the excitement, overtaxed your brain," I tried again.

"Oh, no," he again returned, calmly.

"Then what—why are you here?" I demanded impatiently.

He glanced up at me, then again his eyes riveted themselves upon my clocked hose with intensity.

"I neglected," he said, "to turn off my alarm clock before retiring."

NOCTURNE

By Orrick Johns

THIS violet mist behind the definite towers,
  Picked out by tiny yellows yet too bright
Is like a wine I drink distilled from flowers . . .
  This pale allure of slim and gracious night
Comes calling me to revery and peace.
  Passion lies dead, the flashing of her dress
Across the sun is ended, and release
  Is granted me from wounding loveliness.

All I have loved is beauty, but this hour
  It goes from me; the music in my brain
Is potent as it were some holy power
  That could not live till loveliness were slain
I am a marble saint upon a tomb
  Polished and round in meditative cold,
And all your beauty entering a room
  At once, would find me courteous and old.

THE DARK ROOM

By G. Frederick Macklin

I

THEY had been married fifteen years, of which fact they had two rapidly enlarging evidences.

She was a sensible person, placid, a bit ovoid, and unimaginative. When he had wooed her, in those far-off, gaudy days, she had been slender, rosy, almost obtrusively wholesome. Matrimony and maternity had intensified her roses into a stealthy purple, her wholesomeness into a phlegmatic domesticity, and her slenderness into a bulging bust and tightly corseted but irrepressible hips. She was a nice woman.

He— ah, *he* was a different story, for he was a man, and Nature does not permit men to hibernate out of life so gently. A touch of unmistakable grotesquery was in him. His slowly hardening arteries showed themselves in a certain oafish stiffness, an unconscious parody upon the free movements of yesteryear. The satirical gods lavished their comic art upon him; he was a half-obscene, half-wistful travesty of his own lost youth.

He had been a good young man. He had lived in New York, and he now designated its gay, nocturnal ladies in hushed tones as "lewd women." Dark-eyed, Latin of type, he had been handsome, when, goaded by the incorrigible life-force, he had plunged into matrimony the moment his finances permitted. And now he was within hailing distance of fifty.

After fifteen years of a glutting domesticity, unbroken by even one exhilarating squabble, he stood staring out over the lake from the veranda of his summer cottage. His dark hair was now silvered, his olive skin copper, and his long lines lost in a ponderous paunch. He was inescapably middle-aged.

But in his deep eyes smouldered the mirage of youth. He was unconscious, at the moment, of his paunch or of his paternity. He drank in the beauty of the clear lake and the far hills, of the rolling meadows spreading below him their huge patchwork of variegated greens, golden-streaked with bands of ripening grain, cooled with unexpected squares of snow-flecked buckwheat fields. He thawed under the warmth of the setting sun, until something inside him ached.

Behind him stood his summer cottage, wherein bustled his cheery, lusty spouse, as she scrubbed his leggy offspring in anticipation of their evening meal. Before him stretched a land of dreams, green, gold, rose, blue. Something inside him ached. He was good and true and loyal and kind, but he was a man, and Indian Summer was upon him.

Two healthy youngsters and a strapping spouse, a comfortable security financially, and the thrills of his one dissipation—developing in his own dark room the beautiful landscapes taken by his expensive camera—what warmth have such ashes of life when the heart aches at the beauty of a sunset, the sob of fiddles, the hurt in a line of poetry, the curve of a girl's throat?

As he stared at the setting sun, his fifteen years of monotony slipped from his heart. He breathed deeply, and felt himself eager, idealistic, a boy once more.

The dinner gong sounded.

Automatically he turned and entered

the cottage. His nice, adipose mate had no speculation in her eyes as she beamed over the roast lamb at her well-soaped offspring.

She would have thought you quite mad had you suggested that within that round-tummied papa fluttered a romantic soul.

"Ted, dear," she announced placidly, "the Nortons are coming over to spend the evening."

Edward Wood nodded casually as he carved the roast lamb. But within him the new unrest seemed to rise up and whirl through his brain at the mere mention of the Nortons; and all through the meal he heard as from afar the droning commonplaces of his buxom wife and his own toneless rejoinders. His hands carved and served, his voice responded flatly, but his mind swayed to and fro in a shadowy land of uncrystallized yearnings.

The Nortons! They came often, mere friendly droppings-in of vacation neighbours. Some nights they did not come. These nights were restless and dragging. His wife liked the Nortons to come, for she, too, enjoyed the jollity and nonsense of the bored city girls.

At last dinner was over, and, their one maid having recently abandoned them in haughty *ennui* at such rural isolation, he rose and helped to clear the table and "wash up."

He was rolling down his sleeves and hastily donning his coat as the laughter of the approaching Nortons drifted into the little kitchen. Scurrying out to welcome his guests, he forgot his aches and abstractions in tiny administrations of hospitality.

Wouldn't young Mrs. Norton, an auburn-haired widow, sit in the swing hammock? Would Miss Norton, the elderly aunt, like a footstool? Wouldn't Miss Freeland, their literary and big-worded guest, care for a cushion at her back? Was Miss Natalie Norton quite sure that she was sufficiently warmly clad, that he should not fetch a wrap for her gossamer-veiled shoulders?

Natalie Norton looked straight into his eyes, and smilingly scorned further wrappings.

Natalie was young and magnetic, she had refused more than one eligible, and she casually dropped the most outrageous conversational bombs.

Natalie had deep grey eyes; the longer you looked into them the deeper they seemed; and they had a disconcerting way of turning themselves full and leisurely upon Mr. Wood.

Natalie's clothes were of infinite variety, and never, *never* "sensible."

Natalie stared calmly into Mr. Wood's eyes, and announced that she had trained the top of her body to the minimum of clothing. Then she asked sweetly:

"Don't you think that bundling spoils one's lines, Mr. Wood?"

Mrs. Wood laughed heartily.

"My dear, this is *September*. You should be thinking of flannels."

"That's what *I* tell her," urged the elderly Miss Norton. "Especially as Natalie has twice had pleurisy."

Natalie groaned.

"Give me pleurisy before flannels!"

Mrs. Wood buttoned a brown sweater of her husband's about her prominent person with conscious common sense.

But Mr. Wood bent over Natalie with distressed solicitude.

"Won't you *please?*" he murmured. "I am so afraid you will take cold."

Natalie regarded him leisurely. He seemed to interest her, and as she let her eyes rest in his he leaned lower.

"Your eyes," he whispered fascinatedly, "are so—problematical. At least, not exactly that, but," he paused inarticulate, and then asked ponderously, "What are you thinking of?"

Natalie roused slightly.

"I really don't know," she replied.

He returned to the question of her insufficient clothing.

At last she nodded, as if for peace's sake, that he might get her a wrap.

Mrs. Wood seemed overjoyed by this symptom of sanity.

"Ted, dear, get Miss Natalie your purple bathrobe. We brought so few things with us, as we really are only

camping, and it is the warmest thing I can think of."

Mr. Wood dashed off in quest of the purple bathrobe, while the Titian widow stared resentfully at Natalie, who crossed her slender legs and settled against Mrs. Wood's porch cushions of red Turkey cotton, after first offering one of these atrocities to her auburn-haired sister-in-law, who refused it irritably, adding:

"After all, Natalie, it is rather ridiculous, your coming over here so half clad that poor Mr. Wood has to ransack his wardrobe to fill out."

Wilhelmina Freeland smiled drily.

"Surely the war has not reduced our heroine to coquetting for the bathrobe of a papa?"

"A bathrobe is a perfectly modest garment," drawled Natalie, as Mr. Wood reappeared, and tenderly draped about her the companion of his ablutions.

Natalie submitted with gracious martyrdom, and as her chiffons were absorbed by the purple towelling, Mr. Wood muttered reverently:

"My—er—garment is deeply honoured."

Natalie made no reply, but when he whispered timidly, "Forgive me, if I am too *daring*," she turned interested eyes upon him, and inspected him slowly.

"May I show you some photographs I took to-day?" he asked nervously, his voice soulful, but apprehensive of carrying beyond Natalie's hair-concealed ear.

And his fear was not groundless, for Mrs. Wood's hearty tones cut in sharply:

"Oh, now, Ted, don't start that. Miss Natalie doesn't want to drag her frills among the acids of your old dark room."

"Oh, how interesting!" exclaimed the widow. "But why must we go to the dark room to see your pictures?"

Mrs. Wood laughed.

"Because he has the plates still soaking in some solution. He'll show you the prints to-morrow. Don't bother going just to see the plates."

"Oh, Mr. Wood," cooed the widow, "how interesting. Do you develop them yourself?"

Mr. Wood turned courteously as he replied:

"Why, yes, Mrs. Norton, it's my little hobby."

"Oh, how fascinating! Won't you take me to your dark room? I should so love to see those plates, Mr. Wood."

Mr. Wood rose politely.

"With pleasure, Mrs. Norton." Then he bent and muttered:

"Won't *you* come, too, Miss Natalie?"

Natalie shrugged.

"Oh, I think not. A bathrobe in a dark room seems almost *too*—" She broke off, and then: "Don't you think so, Mr. Wood?"

Mr. Wood started in surprised stimulation, then muttered indulgently:

"Oh, you naughty litle girl!"

"Well, Mr. Wood," urged the widow impatiently, "I am waiting."

"Oh, yes, Mrs. Norton, I'm sorry. Excuse me, Miss Norton," bowing to the elderly aunt and the literary young woman; then softly to Natalie:

"I'll be back in a moment."

As Mr. Wood led the exotic widow into the cottage, Natalie yawned and shuddered her purple wrapping a little off one shoulder.

"Does he spend much time in his dark room, Mrs. Wood?" she asked indifferently.

Mrs. Wood dropped her knitting.

"My dear, he *lives* in it. For the past five years it seems to me he has spent all his after-business hours either chasing about with a camera or shut in his dark room. Sometimes I get impatient."

"Oh, why should you?" remonstrated the wispy Wilhelmina. "After fifteen years not many husbands spend their off hours *alone*."

"My *dear!*" expostulated the elderly Miss Norton feebly.

"Oh, surely," jovially conceded Mrs. Wood. "Ted's an old pet. Do you know we have yet to have our first quarrel? And he is so thoughtful."

"I'm sure," politely agreed Natalie.

"Why, look at him getting you his bathrobe, my dear," proudly illustrated Mrs. Wood. "That's just Ted. Do you know, I am so stout I can't lie comfortably in bed unless Ted arranges a little extra pillow in the small of my back. Well, the old dear will even leave his dark room to settle me cosily in bed for the night, and then go back to his acids, contented because *I* am comfortable."

How *sweet*," sighed the fading spinster, but the scintillating Wilhelmina tipped Natalie the most brazen wink right over Mrs. Wood's old-fashioned coiffure.

Natalie coughed suddenly, almost choked, and decided that she must be taking cold after all.

Mrs. Wood launched into a dissertation upon the comparative merits of the American Red Cross sock regulations and the Kitchener toe of Canadian knitters.

Natalie contributed nothing to this discussion, merely lounging in her purple bathrobe against her scarlet cushions, and gazing out over the moonlit lake toward the far hills, which had so demoralized the soul of the humdrum Mr. Wood.

A few moments later when the amateur photographer returned with his war-starved widow he found Natalie still looking out over the romantic scene. He ensconced himself just behind and to one side of her, and leaning forward, muttered softly,

"I am like you, Miss Natalie; I love Nature."

Natalie raised her eyes innocently.

"Love her, if you must, Mr. Wood, but don't *trust* her."

He stared a moment, then rashly confessed his density.

"How do you mean?" eagerly.

"Oh, nothing," airily retorted the girl, "merely that Nature has a little trick of making fools of men for her own purposes."

Mr. Wood flushed like a boy. He leaned forward and whispered into the tiny ear over his purple bathrobe.

"My dear Miss Natalie, *thank* you."

Natalie gazed blankly at him.

"And for what?" she queried amusedly.

"For your frankness," he whispered in compromisingly low tones, "for your confidence. You don't know what it means to me that you, so sweet and pure, should honour me with such confidence."

Under an impulse to wrap the purple bathrobe more efficaciously about Natalie's shoulders, Mr. Wood found himself with one arm around the girl and an undisciplined hand straying, without any conscious order from his brain, caressingly against her throat.

Natalie stiffened.

The hand withdrew precipitately, as Mr. Wood bent to her and whispered painedly,

"I am not trying to be sentimental, Miss Natalie. I merely wish to prevent a return of your pleurisy."

Mr. Wood believed himself. Natalie again gazed tranquilly into his eyes and settled back on her cushions.

Mr. Wood gasped faintly,

"Thank you, *thank you!*"

The girl turned quizzical eyes on him a moment, then she patted his knee lightly and murmured,

"You are a nice man, Mr. Wood."

II

"TED," called Mrs. Wood, the pros and cons of knitting having been exhausted, "Ted, you poor dear, excuse us talking so much about knitting. Move your chair into the circle; you are crowding poor Miss Natalie."

"How gorgeous to be crowded by anything masculine in war times!" murmured Wilhelmina.

The widow rose restlessly and gazed out over the lake.

"Isn't it glorious?" she asked softly. "All silvery and unreal. Doesn't it make you want all sorts of queer things, Mr. Wood? Haven't you a romantic old bench on the brow of the hill overlooking the lake?"

Mr. Wood rose eagerly.

"Why, yes, Mrs. Norton. Would you care to stroll down there?"

"I should *love* to, Mr. Wood." Then turning to the others, "We won't be long."

Mr. Wood halted disconcertedly.

"Won't you *all* come?" he solicited politely. "Please do. It is very beautiful."

Miss Norton, aunt, arose in assent. Wilhelmina clutched Natalie to drag her from the scarlet cushions, when a peevish wail broke from an upper room.

Mrs. Wood rose with maternal but cumbrous response.

"That's Billy," she explained. "He would eat too many apples to-day. You people go to the bench and I'll toddle up and get the child some castor oil."

Mrs. Norton leaned voluptuously against one of the balcony pillars and cast long green eyes sideways and upwards into Mr. Wood's dark ones.

The serpentine grace and the melting glance agitated yet alarmed Mr. Wood. He smiled tenderly back on the fair widow, grateful for the tribute, deliciously flattered, yet unstirred.

"Shall we go to the bench, ladies?" he asked with a flair of gallantry.

A few moments later, as he deployed his four satellites upon the bench, strategically flanking the two ends with the withered spinster and the too clever Wilhelmina, his chest swelled Napoleonically as he finally seated himself between the seductive widow and the tranquilly outrageous Natalie.

Mrs. Norton leaned close to the only man.

"Do you mind," she asked softly, "if I sit rather close, as I am beginning to feel chilly?"

"Not at all," replied Mr. Wood gallantly. "May I fetch you a wrap?"

"Oh, no, you dear, thoughtful man."

Never before had Mr. Wood been the centre of so much attention. As he chivalrously bundled the widow's heavy cloak closer about her, also inquiring courteously after the warmth of the remoter spinster and the bluestocking, his blood tingled at so much feminine proximity.

He leaned back, his shoulders touching the motor coat of the exotic widow and the purple bathrobe of the artless Natalie.

He gazed out over the moonlit lake, breathed deeply and exclaimed,

"*By Jove, I feel like a boy!*"

Natalie turned her deep eyes upon him. His arm shot out and encircled her.

Natalie giggled.

Mr. Wood's recent youth froze within him. Ponderously, hurtly, he apologized.

"Really, Miss Natalie, I was merely trying to keep you a little warmer."

Natalie controlled herself.

"Oh, my dear Mr. Wood," she begged, "I was only laughing at the house down there, not at *you*." She extended her arm toward a tiny cottage whose distant lights twinkled, and at the same time she leaned confidingly against Mr. Wood's arm.

He pressed her to him, and whispered humbly:

"*Thank you!*"

"Propound the joke about the cottage," requested Wilhelmina.

"Triplets," replied Natalie laconically.

"My dear!" remonstrated Miss Norton.

"Yes, triplets, and yet she still lives with him. How forgiving some women are!"

"*Natalie!*" exclaimed Miss Norton peremptorily, but Mr. Wood rushed to the rescue.

"Oh, now, Miss Norton, that's nothing, really nothing at all. I appreciate Miss Natalie's ingenuousness, her trust. And to-night all barriers are down."

He was astonished at his own daring, but the widow only leaned the heavier, as Natalie demanded explosively:

"Good heavens, Mr. Wood, I hope *one* will stay up!"

"*Natalie!*" choked Miss Norton.

"Why, Auntie, I only meant Mr. Wood's arm. It keeps the small of my back so cosy."

Mr. Wood's arm tightened. He preferred Natalie's blundering spontaneity

and youth to the discreet seductions of the widow.

"*I feel like a boy*," he whispered to Natalie.

"I beg your pardon," queried the widow.

"Mr. Wood says he's cold," replied Natalie blandly.

"Let me warm your knees," cooed the widow.

"Oh, *oh!*" shrieked Natalie. "Wilhelmina, did you *hear* her? Quick, Auntie, chaperone to your job!"

"Naughty child," murmured Mr. Wood indulgently.

"Really, Natalie, your mind is a sewer. I merely threw a fold of my motor coat over Mr. Wood's knees."

Mr. Wood had no perspective on his situation, no realization of the crude banalities of the conversation; he had lost consciousness to everything save that he sat in a moonlit dreamland, the sole man to four women, and that his arm encircled Natalie.

"Please, give me a cigarette," demanded the latter.

Now Mrs. Wood disapproved of women smoking, and Mr. Wood used only cigars. Chagrin filled him as he explained that he had none.

Natalie sighed.

"Then hadn't we better stroll home? I can't last any longer without one. Besides, perhaps Mrs. Wood needs you to help administer the castor oil. It always takes two to pour it down my Pekingese."

They rose. In the movement Mr. Wood manœuvred to whisper to Natalie:

"To-morrow may I take some photos of you, Miss Natalie?"

Natalie smiled sweetly.

"As many as you like, Mr. Wood."

"Thank you—*my dear*."

His hand caressed her arm.

Natalie giggled slightly. He stiffened.

"You seem to have a surplus of jokes, Natalie," yawned the widow.

"No, it's only that I'm thinking poor Mr. Wood's head will be turned as one of the by-products of the war. The men behind are overcourted."

"Natalie!" weakly from Miss Norton.

Natalie's eyes were guileless.

III

As Mr. Wood walked dazedly home, his head whirled with long-dead dreams. His wife and children were to him no more than his mother and sisters may have been to Romeo.

The following day he called on the Norton ladies and took innumerable portraits and landscapes, and as many single portraits of Natalie as he dared.

For this proceeding Natalie had donned a distracting gown that banished from Mr. Wood's mind all memory of his buxom wife and her sensible attire. When he had photographed Natalie standing, sitting, smiling, profile, with her saddle horse, with her Pekingese, driving her roadster, under her parasol, and finally—yes, he was devilish enough—in her bathing suit, he folded up his camera and smiled as at a good day's work.

"To-night I will show you the plates," he said.

Natalie smiled happily.

"Thank you so much, and I do hope some are good, for I want to send them to a boy in the trenches."

The beauty seemed suddenly to fade from the landscape, Mr. Wood felt rather tired.

Natalie laughed on.

"Poor boy, he doesn't mean a thing to me, but it will please him."

Mr. Wood breathed again. He went close to Natalie and surreptitiously slid a square package into her hand.

"What is it?" she asked frankly.

He gazed quickly around, then whispered guiltily:

"*Cigarettes!*"

"Why, how sweet of you! My boy friends always give me them."

Mr. Wood floated on air.

"I want to tell you something, Miss Natalie," he whispered, "something I have never confided to anyone. But I want to tell it to you."

Natalie sobered.

"Yes, Mr. Wood?"

"Because I think you will understand."

"Yes, Mr. Wood," quietly.

"You know, I—er—" he coughed embarrassedly, "admire you."

"Oh, no, you don't."

"I do, I *do!*" ardently. "But I don't want you to think," wistfully, "that I am just an old fool to add to your list."

Natalie raised a protesting hand.

"Please!"

"I want to tell you that thing which I have never confessed to anyone," he continued ponderously.

"Daddy! *Daddy!*" shrilled a childish voice.

He wheeled sharply. A freckled youngster in immaculate sailor suit rushed to him and grabbed his hand.

"Daddy, mother sent me to bring you home to dinner."

Mr. Wood abandoned his soulful confidences to the exigencies of domestic routine. True, he made one feeble attempt to free himself from the distressing adhesiveness of his offspring by suggesting that Billy run over and say "Good afternoon" to Miss Norton, but Billy only clung the closer.

Natalie smiled on the pocket edition of her senescent Romeo.

"Billy, dear," she remarked sweetly, "your eyes and mouth will make all the little girls have heartache some day, and *that* is a pain that even castor oil can't cure." Then she looked frankly into Mr. Wood's dark eyes, and added casually as she stooped and kissed Billy,

"He is the image of you."

Strange, conflicting emotions disturbed Mr. Wood. Was she making love to him via Billy? Was she laughing at him?

He seized Billy's hand and strode quickly off, dragging silently this diminutive replica of his own charms in headlong retreat to their mutual home.

After a snatched meal he rushed to his dark room, and plunged into the rites of developing. He worked feverishly, and when later that evening the Norton ladies strolled over on their usual after-dinner constitutional, he was able to invite Natalie to view the half-finished products of the afternoon's photographic orgy.

Alone with her in his dark room, lit only by his dim scarlet lamp, he first religiously exhibited his dripping plates, then he lingered on, murmuring safe generalities at first, but rapidly plunging into increasingly dangerous personalities.

Suddenly he squared his shoulders as for an avowal.

"Miss Natalie," he said, "when I met you this summer I was stale—*dead.*"

"Why, what nonsense!"

"It's true. For years my life has been getting drabber and duller. I have said to myself, 'After a man has passed forty-five he must expect nothing from life, he must live only for his children,' and I tried to live in my two youngsters."

"They are very sweet," murmured Natalie.

He seemed not to have heard her as he continued earnestly,

"But when I met you—your freshness, your unexpectedness, your frank facing of life, your magnetism—"

"Oh, Mr. Wood!"

"—stimulated me. I seemed to shed ten, twenty years. I felt that life still owed me something. I—I felt like a boy. I—I want to thank you, Miss Natalie."

Natalie cocked her head sidewise and smiled provocatively.

"Are you trying to flirt with me, Mr. Wood?"

"Oh, no, *no!* Do you realize that apart from Mrs. Wood I have never spoken to a woman since my marriage about anything much more compromising than the weather?"

Natalie regarded him with impersonal interest.

"But you're a man who likes women, I can feel that," she replied frankly.

He passed his hand across his forehead, as if tired.

"You don't know what a tonic you have been to me," he murmured. "You're young. You don't understand."

"What don't I understand?"

"My dear, sometimes life gets very commonplace," he said gently. "I have never had a chance like this, a chance of a woman *friend*, and—I wouldn't have the *other*."

Natalie sighed softly.

"For the first time I sympathize with unfaithful husbands."

"My dear!" he expostulated. "You misunderstand. I have *never*—"

"Oh, no, I don't misunderstand, I just realize that if wives are only housekeepers and mothers, then to even the best of husbands there must come moments when life seems stiflingly prosaic and humdrum, when all the boy that never dies in a man stirs and reaches out for some glimmer of romance, for some stimulus, for something that will give a zest, a flavour, a tang to the porridge of every day. And the poor dears, I don't blame them, whether they hunt their will o' wisp through platonic palaverings or on a pair of rouged lips. It's starvation behind both."

This elaborate speech delighted him. He seized her hand.

"You darling! No woman ever said such things to me!"

Natalie looked hastily away, and sneezed slightly.

He drew closer and through his crow's-footed eyes the soul of a boy gazed hungrily.

"Miss Natalie, you are a woman of the world. I can talk frankly to you. It is *love* we want, always that, *always*, whether we own it to ourselves or not. I've been decent all my life. When I was young and wouldn't go out with the boys, they thought me a stick. Then I married, and because I have never been unfaithful they were sure of it. But," his eyes were tragically serious, "they were wrong, wrong. All my life it has been a struggle, and now—"

"But," in clean, frank surprise, "what struggle can it be? You are happily married." He was too much in earnest to realize over what thin ice he was skating.

"You don't understand," he muttered. "I can't explain. I am fond of my wife, but," he shrugged sadly, "what has she ever cared about *me*, the real me? So long as the money came in regularly what did she care for my career? When I tried to be demonstrative she would laugh and say, 'Oh, fiddle-de-dee, Ted, I want to do some sewing!' She has never stimulated my mind." He stared tragically at the radiant youth of Natalie and sighed. "Don't misunderstand. I have been a better husband to my wife since knowing you."

Natalie opened her eyes.

"Why?"

"Because I have wanted to be chivalrous and thoughtful, to be worthy of your friendship. I—*I love you!*"

IV

NATALIE sat perfectly still for some moments, and the boy in the corpulent body stared at her in equal immobility. At last Natalie looked frankly up.

"Mr. Wood, you are a married man and I am a flirt. What bond can there be between us?"

His eyes were starved.

"Can we not be friends?" he begged.

Natalie hesitated.

"I—don't—know. I have always played fair by other women. I leave their men alone."

A shade of bitterness darkened his eyes.

"And would it ever hurt my wife that you should bring a little stimulus into my humdrum life? Does the red lamp in my dark room dim the glare of her contentment?"

Natalie pondered.

"She's very nice, but she *is* stodgy."

He bit his lip.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Wood, sorry for you and for everybody, for it's a phase we must all pass through, all of us who are not blessed with stodginess. Whoever I marry, the chances are that one day we will have each exhausted the power of evoking any *au-delà* for the other, that we will stare over roast beef and children into a drab monotony. I won-

der what I'll do—then—in *my* Indian summer."

"My dear, *you* will never be humdrum!"

"Oh, yes, I *will*, and probably I'll cheapen myself before some blond youth with a dream in his eyes. You see, it is quite fair, the same for us all. No one has more than ten years of the twenties, and no one can side-step the tragedy that lies between forty and fifty."

Mr. Wood's discouraged middle-age was crowding the boy out of his eyes. He looked wilted.

"But I have felt so differently since knowing you," he pleaded. "You have stimulated me. I—I have felt like a boy again."

Natalie placed her hand on his kindly.

"Be young again, Mr. Wood, if my friendship can keep you so."

He clutched her hands impulsively, and passionately kissed the tips of her fingers, murmuring brokenly:

"Thank you, *thank you!*"

Just then a loud knock resounded on the door.

"Ted," called Mrs. Wood, "please don't bore Miss Natalie any longer."

Natalie and Mr. Wood joined the others, and as they were all calmly drinking lemonade Mrs. Wood announced quietly that she was "sick of the country," and intended returning at once to town.

"My dear," remonstrated her husband, "you can't think of leaving this beautiful spot one day before October!"

"Fiddle-de-dee," retorted Mrs. Wood a shade sharply. "All very well to rave about 'beautiful spots' when it isn't *you* who has to see about the autumn preserving."

Mr. Wood collapsed before this domestic ultimatum. He stared at the moonlight on the white birch trees and the close-cropped grass; his eyes wandered from the hills and the lake to Natalie's cameo profile, then he squared his shoulders bravely, and, turning to his practical mate, he said submissively:

"Whatever you say, my dear."

V

Two days later they departed.

The Norton ladies walked over to wish them good-bye. Mr. Wood's motor was before the door of the little cottage. Mrs. Wood was buttoning up the coats of her offspring. A few yards from the motor Natalie stood impassive, the sunlight gilding her brown hair. She had a restful, picturesque quality, as she smiled lazily upon the bustling departure of the Woods.

And as Mr. Wood, bravely bearing his burden of domesticity, strapped up various trunks and bags, he caught snatched glimpses of her remote graciousness.

At last it was over. The motor was laden with suitcases and children and the distended, puffing Mrs. Wood.

He stood with bared head and outstretched hand before the imperturbable Natalie. His very soul was in his eyes. She saw a look of dumb animal pain pleading for help from her, and she placed her fingers softly in his.

"Good-bye, Miss Natalie." His voice was low, unsteady. "I shall never forget this summer, your goodness, your sweetness, your—"

"Ted! *Ted!*" called his wife sharply. "We've only ten minutes to catch the train."

"Yes, dear," he replied with a twitch of his lip. Then a sudden inspiration illumined his features.

"Miss Natalie," he begged, "won't you please drive to the station with us?"

"*Ted!*" shrieked his wife, "*we've forgotten the pots and pans!*"

He dropped Natalie's soft fingers, and plunged into the cottage, emerging a moment later, laden with two huge, conglomerate, brown-paper collections of kitchen utensils. Through the wrappings and strings, various homely articles thrust their separate granite-wear or iron handles. He gazed with dog-devotion at Natalie as he passed her with his unromantic burden, and a faint flush rose to the roots of his greyed

hair. He realized that he was ridiculous.

The pots and pans safely stowed in the motor, he returned to the Norton ladies. His back was to his wife, as he again asked that Natalie accompany them to the station. His words were commonplacely discreet, but in his dark eyes drifted a water-logged hope that no discretion could quite drown.

Natalie hesitated, vaguely distressed.

"I'd like to, but—"

The widow cut her short.

"Nonsense, Natalie, your aviator is coming by the north train, and you couldn't be back in time."

Mr. Wood stared at Natalie with his mouth a little open.

"You—expect a—a friend?" he asked slowly.

Natalie felt annoyed at herself for flushing, as she nodded assent.

Mr. Wood saw the flush. He bowed slightly.

"Then this is good-bye."

"But *I* would love to see you off," cried the widow gaily.

Mrs. Wood was growing impatient as the widow jumped lightly in, followed heavily by Mr. Wood.

Natalie raised her arm and waved gracefully as the motor drove away.

VI

HALF an hour later the widow returned to Natalie and her aviator.

"Well, they got off beautifully," she announced. "Mrs. Wood seemed sorry to go, but Mr. Wood didn't say a word. He sat as still as a mouse, sort of dreamy. He is *such* a good husband, and so domesticated. I suppose he was counting his pots and pans.

NOCTURNE

By Dennison Varr

HE was rather stupid and required the most minute instruction before executing an order, but still he was tall and handsome and knew how to make love much better than her husband. She told him she would join him in the orchard at midnight, and asked him to throw a pebble at her window when he arrived. The plan miscarried. Her husband detected the intrigue. She forgot to tell her lover what size pebble to use.

TO love is to look forward to marriage; to marry is to look backward to love.

WOMEN'S eyes often say things they would blush to utter.

A WOMAN'S strength lies in her husband's weaknesses.

THE SUCCESSOR TO MR. HENNERBY

By Ben Hecht

I

HAVING abused, browbeaten, henpecked and shattered the spirit and ambition of her husband during the nine years of their married life, it was but natural that Mrs. Hennerby was plunged into a violent and consuming grief upon his death. Naïvely considered, the widow's grief might be easily explained as the workings of a remorse refreshed from day to day by the memories of the unrelenting and outrageous manner in which she had behaved during the life of her husband. Nothing would be further from the truth. The grief experienced by Mrs. Hennerby in her widowhood is cited as natural for no other reason than that it contains the elements of fraud, sham, self-deceit and exquisite inconsistency which, as every one knows, constitute the normal operations of the feminine mind.

Far from quickening her sorrow with the thought of the abuse she had heaped upon the head she had for nine years characterized as worthless, Mrs. Hennerby suffered simply from a sense of loss. She had lost Hennerby. In the course of their union his presence had been a constant affliction to her. She had perceived him to be a man devoid of initiative. His shiftlessness had grated on her. She had gradually acquired a vicious contempt for him. And, having discovered him to be a wavering-minded, spineless, incompetent variety of jackass, and having discovered further that neither joy nor interest were ever to be expected from him, Mrs. Hennerby, like most women in her predicament, had not rested content to enjoy the fruit of her perception in silence. Her chief preoccupation became the ambition to reveal to Hennerby the variety and depth of the contempt she held toward him. And, as the most effective manner in which she might show this contempt consisted in forcing him to remain for ever within ear-shot of her abuse, the couple might be said to have spent a life at least outwardly ideal. They had been inseparable. Although nothing seemed, during these years, to aggravate Mrs. Hennerby as much as the presence of her sad-eyed husband, she would as soon have thought of cutting off an arm as of permitting him to spend an evening or an idle afternoon away from her.

Thus to the shiftless critic of life, the fact that, as the day of her husband's death receded, Mrs. Hennerby dwelt with ever-increasing fervour upon the high charm, the stalwart virtues and fine nobility of her defunct mate, may appear a monstrous perversion of reality. Or it may appear that Mrs. Hennerby had taken leave of her reason together with her memory. A violent no must be offered such conclusions. Mrs. Hennerby was aware of the actual qualities of her husband, as much so after his death as before it. But, being an entirely normal member of her sex, Mrs. Hennerby's thought did not operate upon any premiss of fact. The natural instinct for fraud and self-deceit which the poets are continually celebrating as "the mystery of woman" made it entirely possible for Mrs. Hennerby to know one thing and believe another. Thus it became Mrs. Hennerby's custom to contemplate even in such recesses of thought as were possible to her the sterling qualities of the dead man. His indomitable purposes, as she now recalled them,

moved her frequently to tears. His charity, his tenderness, his swift and comprehending intelligence, haunted her mournful hours. In short, she remembered him as some inviolable paragon. She remembered their married life as a radiant kinship, a union blessed in a thousand unforgettable ways.

Among sympathetic friends she was never tired of proclaiming that the nine years spent with dear Hennerby had passed as quickly as so many days, that they had been one uninterrupted honeymoon. The fact that they had, indeed, been inseparable contributed to the seeming truth of this statement. Such corroboration, however, was quite unnecessary. Mrs. Hennerby's world as well as everybody else's world existed upon a foundation which may be summed up in the phrase "marriage is the ideal state." And although each and every one of Mrs. Hennerby's friends knew this to be a lie, being married themselves, they were continually bending all their efforts to convince their collective consciousness that the statement was indisputable. Mrs. Hennerby's fraud in the matter was such stuff as the hokum by which they lived is made of. And so it befell that having cordially despised the man and been despised with equal though less vigorous cordiality by the man himself, Mrs. Hennerby, without the slightest surprise at herself, went about successfully in public mourning the loss of a great lover and a matchless companion.

II

Instead of permitting this fiction to fade with the years, Mrs. Hennerby, by virtue perhaps of what is known as feminine logic, managed by an attentive coddling and much brandishing of her black-bordered handkerchiefs to cause the thing to bloom and take on, among her friends, the nature of a legend. It is well to point out, lest the stubborn critic persist in regarding Mrs. Hennerby as a species of Machiavellian temperament full of sinister mental convolutions, that the good widow was guilty of nothing hypocritical or mysterious, in the sense that she did not deviate from the normal standards of her kind. The lie she told herself and her world after her husband's death was inspired by the quite natural impulse which people have to say a certain thing happened when they know that it did not happen. By affirming that it did, however, they manage to feel some of the satisfaction, some of the joy and beauty which the thing in happening would have given them as a reality. Ordinarily people who have this impulse to affirm where negation were the truth, are handicapped by a fear that their fraud will be exposed. Thus would the echo of joy, the mirage of happiness which their lie afforded them, be ludicrously dispersed.

As can easily be understood, Mrs. Hennerby suffered from no such fear. There was no possibility of an astonished and protesting Hennerby rising up and confronting her. The husband she had abused and hated was dead. She could romance over him to her heart's content, and he was powerless to deny her the privilege. As for what effect it might have on the perturbed spirit of her husband and what ghostly vengeance he might seek—these were matters which interested the widow not at all. For Mrs. Hennerby's superstition—a virtue in common with most of her sex—was directed more to interpretation of real life about her than to speculation as to the probable phenomena beyond her physical sight.

Mrs. Hennerby was thirty-five when her husband died. At thirty-nine—four years after his sainted and gifted soul had made its way to a rejoicing heaven—she still placed (to borrow again from the reasoning of the poets) the immortelle of her grief upon the shrine of his memory. Photographs of the defunct Hennerby confronted the visitor in the widow's home from every vantage point. Indeed, more than ever in his life he was now present in this home, a spoiled, petted and admired paragon whose departed virtues ruled gently over the premises.

At thirty-nine Mrs. Hennerby was a trim, pleasingly-figured woman. About her hovered an air of uncommon things. Her well-fitting black clothes with their edges and facings of white, her eyes like mourners keeping constant vigil at the grave in her heart, and the loss of eighteen pounds had, since her other more classical bereavement, converted her into almost a woman of beauty. Hennerby, shiftless and impossible ass that he had been during his life, had made of his death a financial stroke which caused him to be revered in the world he had left as a creature of shrewdness and a model provider. He had perished while heavily insured, leaving his widow a comfortable sum. Upon its income she lived tidily on, in the apartment they had shared. Nothing, she vowed, would ever induce her to abandon this home. As reason she gave, with simple wistfulness, the fact that the place was sacred with memories of her husband.

III

When the four years had passed, a number of Mrs. Hennerby's friends became inspired with the idea that the widow owed it to herself to marry again. They were women whom Mrs. Hennerby had known for varying lengths of time, some of them neighbourhood friends, others co-workers in the two afternoon clubs to which she belonged. They broached the subject with caution and respect. They were all married women of Mrs. Hennerby's general age. Among themselves they now held counsel, exchanging elated prophecies concerning the widow's matrimonial future. They fell to laying traps for males of their acquaintance, busied themselves with arranging introduction and social opportunities.

The thrill of vicarious romance possessed them. They went about chattering of the widow's possible conquests, reciting with a wonderful unselfishness her many well preserved fascinations, and assuring each other that it would be a shame for so delightful and capable a woman to live the rest of her life in loneliness. Within a few months their determination to see the widow married had achieved the proportions of a communistic obsession. She was their age. She had been married even as they were. Causing her to fall in love, to be wooed, to be led to the altar would be almost like experiencing such events themselves. It would be to recover for a moment through the delightful fate of another the romance that had eluded them since their own marriages.

Mrs. Hennerby met their advances with dignity and a sorrowful humour. She replied simply that the thought of being unfaithful to the man she had loved and still loved was repugnant to her. Death had not parted them. Later she pointed out that it would be impossible for her to live with any man—after Hennerby. And—the attack growing in violence—the widow summoned forth her final argument. She had no desire to marry. With this confession the activities in her behalf were redoubled. During her remonstrances, Mrs. Hennerby had, with a courtesy which distinguished her even in her grief—consented to oblige her solicitous friends by exposing herself to the masculine eligibles produced for her enchantment.

The process and events by which Mrs. Hennerby was ultimately lured out of the convent of her memories are of interest chiefly in revealing the depths of her friends' hunger for the romance denied them in their own lives. Suffice that, always modest, always protesting and using always her grief as a base of supplies for her refusals, Mrs. Hennerby slid out of her original decision. To do her justice, she had entirely changed since the days in which the original Hennerby had known the lash of her tongue and the crack of her whip. The line she had coddled during the four years had soothed her temper. The wholly illegitimate grief she had nursed during the period had not only improved her

figure but likewise added a sweetness to her manner and even a sense of humour to her thought. Such things are possible to women. And thus, although it may seem a precipitous contradiction of all that has been chronicled, Mrs. Hennerby found herself in the fifth year of her widowhood provokingly wooed by a man ten years her senior.

His name was Harrison Potter. He was a judge on the municipal bench whose career had somehow fallen short of his distinguished goatee, but whose income and prestige were nevertheless items not to be despised therefor. In addition he was possessed of a capacity for platitude which, as much as his goatee, had served at one time to raise high hopes among his admirers for his future. He had never married.

Despite the fine sonorous expostulations on the part of this dignitary, Mrs. Hennerby hesitated. Her hesitation was no matter of unworthy caprice or coquettish calculation. In her heart, Mrs. Hennerby knew that with marriage to the judge her mourning and all that it meant to her would be over. She would have to lay her grief aside, and in laying it aside she knew, although she felt no consciousness of deceit in the thing, that she would have to forget her fraud and turn her attention from a makebelieve past to the truthful present. Her romance with Hennerby, conducted entirely after the sainted man had died, would have to be shelved. And Mrs. Hennerby for six months wavered between the known satisfactions which the cherishing of her first husband's non-existent virtues afforded her, and the unknown delights which the preoccupation with a second husband's existing qualities might offer. The dilemma was as involved as it sounds.

Women like Mrs. Hennerby locate a middle ground. The judge reminded her of Hennerby. It was not so much the physical aspect of the man—Hennerby, worm though he was, would have scorned the goatee. It was rather an indefinable something which the widow chose to identify under the heading of soul. The soul of the judge was like unto the soul of her previous mate. Mr. Potter's virtues endeared themselves to her both on their own account and because they were like the virtues she had known to love in her former husband and whose memory she had cherished since his death.

Thus in Mrs. Hennerby's mind there underwent a slight adjustment. By this is meant that she deluded herself concerning the qualities of her judicial suitor exactly as she had concerning those of her husband. For, having permitted the past to lie to her, she now found it logically necessary to permit the present to do likewise. By so doing she brought her romance up to date. But since it is not the conventional thing to weep and mourn over existing causes for amorous unrest, Mrs. Hennerby's grief gave way to a joyousness of heart which was hailed by her conspiring friends as testimonial to their skill in the whole affair.

IV

At the end of the six months, the adjustment complete, the widow's hesitation was a thing of the past. By a process of thought which must be identified as natural, Mrs. Hennerby was now ready to embrace the offer of Mr. Potter and became as ecstatic over her new romance as she had been grief-stricken over her old one. All this despite the fact that it has been pointed out, with that clarity which was, alas, denied the widow, that neither of these romances ever existed in fact, but were no more than the day dreams by which she sought to make pleasing an imperfect world.

Mr. Potter approached the day of his wedding with an increasing elation. Never had any previous event stirred him to such heights of platitude and banality. He was accordingly hailed by his friends as an enviably radiant and inspired creature. Sitting alone in his bachelor quarters one evening a week before the nuptials, Mr. Potter reviewed with proper solemnity the future before him. He was about to em-

bark on the frail craft of matrimony upon the seas of life for the shores of bliss. He pondered with that judicial poise which fascinated his admirers upon the qualities of the woman who was to be his companion, his guide and his solace.

Concerning womanhood in general, Mr. Potter knew chiefly that it was the tender vine which clung to the sturdy oak of love, and also—for Mr. Potter was a man of varying fancies—that it was the beacon star whose steadfast and holy light guided the footsteps of man to the goal of happiness. The theatres and the magazines had contributed greatly to Mr. Potter's understanding of this, as well as numerous other questions. But in searching his experience the judge found himself somewhat handicapped in the matter of widows. He had in a casual way been aware of their existence as a type. It was obvious to Mr. Potter that a widow could not well be included under the head of womanhood whose chiefest charm was its innocence and inexperience in the deeper things of life. And yet to deny these fascinations to Mrs. Hennerby savoured of an unchivalrous and abandoned mind. The judge's darkness in the matter can be readily understood and with equal readiness forgiven. For it must be acknowledged that in contemporary fiction the widow is one of the vaguest figures in that dim stretch between the altar and the grave.

Mr. Potter with a smile turned his thought to other less perturbing issues, his impending happiness and great good fortune. He had never thought he would marry. He perceived now that his hesitancy had been guided by Providence. It had been his high lot to wait for the woman whom God had designated for him. With these and similar soothing conjectures the judge dozed off quietly.

* * * * *

The fact of the somewhat startling developments in his future alone makes it necessary to fall upon him as he dozes and expose the real state of the good man's mind—a state of which he was happily unconscious. Otherwise the thing might be left in the idyllic light in which Mrs. Hennerby and himself fancied it to exist.

Mr. Potter had fallen in love with reason. He had had as a rival for the widow a man whose virtues and great qualities were seemingly not to be equalled in the world. This man was Hennerby. The widow had acquainted him with Hennerby. She had told him during the early stages of his courtship that his suit was hopeless. The sainted man with whom she had lived for nine years had made it almost impossible for her to love again any man, however worthy, who was not the equal in every way of Hennerby. And with due respect to the judge's many engaging qualities, she had despaired of ever finding this equal, or indeed of ever thinking that it was to be found.

There had followed the second stage —the period in which Mr. Potter began to remind Mrs. Hennerby of her first husband. At first such reminiscences had been infrequent. But gradually they had increased both in number and in intensity. The effect upon Mr. Potter had been electric. He had grown to fancy Hennerby, not as a living contendent for the widow's love and esteem, but as a holy rival. To arouse in the widow the feeling that he, Potter, possessed virtues and qualities as noble as those of the man with whom she had lived, became for him a consuming vanity. His conduct toward the widow as a result had been that of a man struggling to give vent continually to his finest self.

The third and final stage of his courtship had raised him to heights practically ecstatic. He perceived that he had routed Hennerby from the heart of the widow. He perceived that by such routing he had impressed the woman with the fact that he, Potter, was a man of qualities superior even to those of the saint whose memory she had been celebrating by her grief. To have won the love and esteem of an ordinary woman would have af-

forded him hardly more than a feeling of satisfaction. His conquest of the widow, however, gave him a sense of triumph. Goatee and all, he walked on air. His sense of his own value had received so great an impetus from the widow's choice between him and the man whom she had acknowledged was the most magnificent and sainted of his sex, that for the first time in his life his platitudes failed him. A deep and complete joy possessed him. The widow's words, for ever in his ears, rang like some final and heavenly judgment.

It may be well to repeat these words.

"I never thought, Mr. Potter, that I should marry again. I never thought that anywhere in this world could be found a man who could take the place of my dear husband. He was so wonderful and sweet and our happiness was so supreme. But you have made me feel differently. I feel certain now that if I marry you I will find only that happiness which he gave me. It is not as if I were deciding blindly, inspired only by love. As you can imagine, no man not as noble as was Mr. Hennerby would have influenced me despite anything."

Here the widow lowered her eyes, sighed, squeezed the hand that was in hers and concluded. "I have found that you are everything Mr. Hennerby was—and more. His sainted memory found that you are everything, Mr. Potter. And I am certain that if the dear departed could speak, Mr. Hennerby would tell me now that I have acted in the best interests of not only you and me, but of his memory."

V

Mr. Potter and Mrs. Hennerby were married in the afternoon of a day in June. There were flowers and tears, music and friends. The latter including the conspirators who, in a fashion, had brought this thing to pass, stood by with eyes almost as kindled as those of the bride and hearts almost as suffocated. They returned to their homes with their thoughts softened and their illusions almost repaired. Mr. Potter and his bride left for their honeymoon.

Exercising a gentle but insistent prerogative, the judge had persuaded his new wife to abandon the scene of her former happiness—the apartment she had occupied during the years of her previous married life. Accordingly, on their return from their trip to New York, Mrs. Potter had busied herself hunting out new quarters. These were eventually found, and, in the third month of their married life, the Potters set about packing and moving.

A brief glance at these three months will suffice. They had proved to be everything the judge had dreamed they might. Understanding, complete and ineffable—the words were his own—had at once characterized their union. The feeling that he had now in reality supplanted the memory that was his rival and that his love and virtues afforded his bride a happiness which surpassed that almost divine bliss which Hennerby had given her, served to maintain in the judge's heart and even to increase his original ecstasy.

It was while in this condition that Mr. Potter found, in the bottom of a trunk which he was emptying during their packing activities a leather-bound book. Stretched diagonally across its surface were the gold letters—"My Diary." Pasted in an upper corner was a small square of paper containing the writing—"William T. Hennerby—Private."

Mr. Potter, holding this strange document in his hand, looked about him. His first impulse was to summon his bride. Her absence from the adjoining room somehow deterred him. She was busy in a back part of the house. The judge, with a tender smile at the volume in his hand, entered the partially dismantled library and seating himself, decided to open it. As his fingers parted the covers, an emotion of awe overcame him. He felt as if he were prying into the gates of heaven. So vivid to him were the qualities of the dead man whose very thoughts he now held in his hand, that for a moment Mr.

Potter found himself trembling, found his throat growing dry and a curious fear creeping into his heart. Though numerous and perhaps important, Mr. Potter's sensations were brief. For in less than a minute after seating himself, his eyes rested upon the opened page of the diary.

For several moments subsequent the judge sat with his mouth open, his eyes centred and a look of such bewilderment generally on his face as he might have revealed if Mrs. Potter had abruptly entered the room and with a demoniacal shout swatted him over the head with a rolling pin. Following his first distortion of feature a sweat broke out on the judge's brow. This was succeeded by a pallor and chill so violent that it became impossible for him to read any further. His head whirled, his thought reeled about, refusing to clothe itself in words. He waited a few moments until the dizziness had partially subsided and then with a feverish, desperate air applied himself to the irregular script on the pages before him.

The opening entry was undated. Crudely, viciously it launched off. Here the ink had spattered from a violent pen. There a blot had formed.

"Suicide would be preferable to the Hell on earth in which I live. If I had the courage I would murder her. But I haven't the courage. I must go on living with her. I must, I must. She has made a spineless imbecile of me. But what can I do? Oh, God, nothing. Submit. Submit to her horrible tempers. Submit to the continual contempt she shows me. I can no longer call my soul my own. And the worst of it is that it is all my own fault. There was a time when I had strength, when I should have ended this miserable marriage. Now it is too late. Five years of it. And I have become actually almost as contemptible as she says I am. A man with an ounce of manhood would have beaten her long ago. I know now I am weak. I know now there is no hope for me. I must go on, I who once was so ambitious and showed such promise. Her accusations are in the main correct. The mere fact that I do not destroy her proves that I am actually the idiot she calls me. Oh why am I writing this? Why?"

VI

THIS ended the first entry. Mr. Potter turned back to the cover of the volume and stared with eyes become now too wild for further reading at the bit of paper pasted in the corner. Yes, it was William Hennerby—Private. It was, Almighty God! What hideous and fantastic jest was this! It was the diary of his wife's first husband! Of his rival! Of the man—of the man who—

Mr. Potter tore open the volume at random. A new entry confronted him. He read, the blood throbbing in his head and a sensation of illness in his stomach.

"I will not live long. Shame is killing me, shame and all the miseries that go with it. To-day she outdid herself. And I deserved it, Oh God, I deserved it. I brought Johnson home for dinner. It is my own home. Yes, it is! I cannot blame Johnson for laughing. I am weak. I am an idiot. I am the damndest fool that ever lived. And she has made me this. If I'd been a man I'd have risen up and killed her as she was talking. The idea of her telling Johnson such things, of showing her contempt for me in my own home before a stranger! The thing is, Oh God—I can't write. After Johnson left I tried to talk to her. I should have known better. She said she wants the whole world to know what a fool I am, and how Lowrey was made manager over my head and how I have no intelligence or wit or manhood. Well, she is right. That's the worst part of it. No man could live with her for almost six years as I have done and keep any of his intelligence or wit or manhood. I still don't know why I am writing this. I don't know. I don't know."

Mr. Potter closed the book quietly. He stood up, swaying a bit on his feet.

His eyes sought the back of the house where his bride was busying herself with the final rites over the china barrels. Mr. Potter sat down again. He would wait until she was finished and came into the room. He would wait. His thoughts, until this moment inarticulate, began now to present themselves to him. The rage he had felt during the first minutes of his discovery ebbed. He had made a fearful mistake. He had been fearfully deceived. His life was ruined. These were the thoughts that occupied Mr. Potter's attention. Then drawn by a horrible curiosity, Mr. Potter reopened the book and resumed his reading. A misery contracted his heart as he turned the pages. From beginning to end he pursued the terrible document. At its conclusion he felt limp, his very soul seemed bewildered.

The sound of his wife approaching restored a part of his active senses. He must hide the book. As yet he had not thought of Mrs. Potter. His entire mind had been occupied with the nauseous contemplation of the man who had written the things he had read. Now he prepared himself to meet the other. His primary emotion became at once a fear lest she would see the volume. He rushed toward the closet and returning the thing to the trunk, quickly covered it. He felt relieved. She had reached the dining room. She must never know.

Instead of hatred for her, instead of indignation for the outrageous lie that had been foisted upon him, Mr. Potter prepared to confront his wife with the emotions of a man who had been guilty of some loathsome deed. He returned to the dismantled library trembling. He did not know why he trembled. With the fall of Hennerby, Potter had fallen. He had so long identified himself with the saintly virtues of that creature that the exposure had in a manner crushed him, even as it had dissipated the myth of his rival. These things Mr. Potter did not understand, but they were none the less present in his emotion. He would have to be careful. Why, he did not know. But an instinct, functioning apart from his brain, warned him. To reveal the truth about Hennerby would be to reveal the truth about himself. He was Hennerby's successor. He must remain the successor to the legendary Hennerby and not to the miserable creature who had actually existed.

Mrs. Potter entered the room. Attracted by the unusual air of her husband, she paused and then frowned.

"Why, Harrison," she exclaimed, "you've hardly done anything. You don't expect me to do all the work, do you?"

Mr. Potter stared in return and coughed confusedly. The woman before him terrified him. He bit his lip and fumbled with a nervous hand at his goatee. Its presence somehow stirred him for an instant to revolt. His words, however, died before utterance. For before he could give vent to them, Mrs. Potter had thrown herself into a chair and burst into tears.

"You are impossible," she wailed. "Here I've been working all day and you come home and sit around."

"But, dearest," the judge moved toward her, fright entangling his steps.

"Don't talk back. I won't listen." Mrs. Potter covered her face with her hands. "I begin to see that there were some things poor Hennerby . . ."

Mr. Potter lowered himself to the floor and embraced her on his knees.

"Come, come," he whispered. "Let's not quarrel."

VII

THE conspirators responsible for the match are still elate. To their own somewhat erring and imperfect mates they are for ever pointing out the ideal life of the newlyweds.

"It is certainly a love match. Just look at them. You'll have to admit that the Potters are inseparable."

And this, indeed, is true. Although they have been married only eight months the judge and his wife, who is recovering her original weight, are already inseparable.

THE FLIGHT

By Samuel Roth

THE incident of the defection of Mrs. Barrister from the Barrister domicile produced the liveliest conversation the Country Club had known since the less romantic, but at that time exciting, event of the marriage of old Pealby to a visiting ballet dancer whose very name was shortly afterwards forgotten. The discussion gained in pathos through the absence of Barrister himself, whom the club fancy would have writhing morosely in the grand loneliness of his deserted house, his mind intent on happy recollections of his courting days with the vanished Mrs. Barrister.

The sentiment which apparently dominated the atmosphere was that, in a broad sense, the doom which had fallen upon Jack Barrister was justly deserved by him, that he had spent too much time with, and had lavished too much attention upon, other women—and that it could not be expected of a fascinating little woman like Mrs. Barrister that she would sit home knitting socks while her prodigal husband flitted about the familiar lawns that were legitimate playground only for unrecriminating bachelordom.

"For all you know," young Norris added slyly, "any one of you married fellows might come home to-night to find that the bird had flown the golden cage."

This was graceless coming from Norris, whom the thirty-fourth year had left untouched by the common fate which befalls all mankind.

For Harry Jackson, who alone had remained unperturbed throughout the entire argument, Norris's remark indicated the high watermark of boredom, and he promptly rose to go.

"Not much chance of such good fortune coming my way," he mused as he sauntered out. His faith in the integrity of Mrs. Jackson was based on a veritable Gibraltar of certainty: she was very fond of him and in point of attractiveness leaned more in the direction of the Puritanical type.

Jackson's way home led past the Barrister house. As he passed by the lighted windows, he murmured:

"Jack Barrister, if your wife had been at all like mine, and she had still retained the decency to run away, you would now be feasting on grape-juice and blackberries instead of wailing over the cruelty of the departed."

As he approached his own house, Jackson was somewhat taken back to find it in almost complete darkness. He pulled out his watch to reassure himself. It was only a little after ten, and ordinarily the lights were not out before midnight. His early homecoming so shocked the butler that he stammered in informing him that Madame had gone out early in the afternoon and had not yet returned. Jackson deposited with him his hat, coat and stick, and proceeded upstairs with unusual liveliness.

At the head of the stairs he paused. He found himself looking at the interior of his wife's boudoir, for the first time in fifteen years of married life. It was lighted and deserted, and in obedience to a sudden impulse he ventured in. He paused in the middle of the room, conscious of a feeling of confusion at having entered—he had so long refrained. He espied a piece of paper flung carelessly on the table. He picked it up. It was in a feminine hand.

Most likely his wife's. It was fifteen years since he had seen a specimen of Mrs. Jackson's handwriting. In that time he had quite forgotten that she possessed a handwriting of her own.

He looked the note over carefully; he repeated this operation several times; and with every perusal the light of amazement in his face deepened the more. When he dropped it back to its former place on the table the expression on his face amounted to one of bewilderment.

The note informed him, without address and anonymously, that owing to his brutal and thoughtless treatment of her she was going away from him, never to return again. . . .

Jackson turned slowly in the direction of the entrance and made thoughtfully in the direction of his own rooms.

"This ought to make another sensation among the boys," he murmured, dropping into an easychair. "I think I ought to celebrate!"

He pressed a button placed conveniently on the side of the deep armchair and the butler appeared.

"The best champagne we have, Gregory. And bring a glass for yourself."

The bewildered Gregory almost immediately returned with the wine and glasses.

"Now, Gregory," resumed Jackson with spirit, "stop acting like an animated bean-pole. Imagine for a while that you are my confidential friend who may smoke my cigars in the dining-room as well as in the pantry. Now tell me how you like Mrs. Jackson—you may be absolutely frank with me."

The butler stared as though he had suddenly lost his power of speech.

"No, don't answer me now. First drink to my new freedom and happiness. Drink, like that. And now tell me. I know you don't like Mrs. Jackson any more than I do. Come, come."

"If I may say so," stammered Gregory, "Mrs. Jackson is a rather goodish woman."

"True, true," agreed Jackson, draining his second glass. "But that's not exactly what I meant. You must admit that she is rather plain."

The butler seemed lost in deep contemplation.

"Well, rather," he admitted after a pause.

"Now you're talking, Gregory! Have another. That's it! And don't you think she's rather sharp, too?"

Once more the butler plunged into a sea of thought, from which he emerged again with an affirmative.

"And I don't think she's been treating the housemaid well at all," he added.

"There you are!" exclaimed Jackson, pouring out another glass for himself. "I knew you would come to after a while! Marie is an excellent housemaid, an unusual housemaid, I should say. Quite charming, too. You're blushing, I see. Do you know, I've often wondered why you allow such a handsome girl to pass you by."

"That, sir, is a matter personal to myself," retorted Gregory with offended dignity.

"Certainly, certainly, my dear Gregory. That is entirely personal. But what I meant to say was this: A man has a right to pick himself a pleasant wife, hasn't he?"

"If he wants one, sir."

"Don't be absurd, Gregory. Every man wants a pleasant wife. Why shouldn't he? Answer me that, Gregory."

Driven to the wall Gregory replied: "You ought to know, sir."

Jackson threw up his hands in despair. "I *don't* know, Gregory. That's the tragedy of it. I *don't* know. I often look at myself in the mirror—I am not a bad-looking sort at all, am I, Gregory?"

"I should not take you for one, sir."

"I know it, Gregory. As I was saying, I often look at myself in the mirror and ask: 'Why is it that you should have chosen for yourself a wife of such outright plainness?' Why, there is a doubt as to almost every woman I know. I can find grounds of attraction in almost every other woman I can think of. Mrs. Jackson is so plain I believe

I could draw her with a lead pencil, keeping my eyes tightly shut."

"But you forget that Mrs. Jackson has her fine points," ventured Gregory.

"I should like to know what they are. I know what you will say, though. She can cook, bake, sew. All this is very well, but are there not cooks and dressmakers who are also pretty?"

"Your argument is invincible, sir."

"We'll drink to that!" exclaimed Jackson. "Fill 'em up, Gregory. And now I am going to put your good judgment to the test again. You know Mrs. Cameron, she's been here very often. What do you think of her?"

"Mrs. Cameron is a very charming lady," Gregory replied, his reserve stiffening.

"I can see by your manner that you have perceived some great fault in her. Out with it, Gregory. You are doing me a great service. In the future I give you free access to my cigars—you will not have to loot my box when I am away. Tell me with perfect frankness what fault you find in her."

"Well, I think she is rather sharp, too."

"Oh, I am quite accustomed to that," said Jackson lightly

"From what I have observed, sir," continued Gregory, "sharpness is a very much more effective weapon in a pretty woman than in one like Mrs. Jackson. If I may express myself so, sir, one need not, indeed does not, heed the sharpness of a plain woman, but it is torture when the mouth which censures is also pretty."

"You are right, Gregory. You are a Solomon! We shall leave Mrs. Cameron out. Now there is Mrs. Bender. Surely you don't think she is sharp."

"Quite the contrary, sir. Mrs. Bender is altogether spineless. An invertebrate, I would call her, sir."

"Your observations do you great credit, Gregory. I see you are a man of the world. Now tell me, what do you think of Miss Lenworth?"

"A very brainy woman, sir. And quite attractive. A most unusual combination, I might remark. Most unusual. But may I inquire what interest you may have in these people?"

"A very deep interest, Gregory. Any one of them might become the future Mrs. Jackson."

Gregory's hand, half raised in the air, dropped swiftly.

"Why, has anything happened to Mrs. Jackson?" he asked.

Jackson was about to reply when the sound of approaching footsteps attracted him. They were very familiar footsteps, and in a moment Mrs. Jackson herself entered the room, and Gregory vanished.

Jackson stared at her in amazement.

"I thought you were gone," he said with genuine reproach in his voice.

"Gone! I've been hunting Marie, that wretch of a maid of ours, all day long. What do you think! She left this morning, and the first I knew of it was a little note on my table to which she was even ashamed to sign her name!"

Jackson sank back speechless in his chair.

"Oh, damn!" he muttered, and receded into a less illusory but more oblivious sleep.

A WOMAN looking back over her love affairs finds much to remember and little to regret. A man finds little to remember and much to regret.

I MET THE RAIN

By Louise Driscoll

I MET the rain to-day in an open place,
The young rain, adventuring, she danced as she came along.
Her dress was all of silver, she had a smiling face,
And she sang to the dusty trees a little song.

The dusty trees were glad and they clapped their hands.
I saw a tired flower turn and smile.
At the bend of a little path where a linden stands,
I watched the rain at play for a little while.

Her feet were small and she trod on the grass and bent it,
She carried a scarf of mist that brushed my cheek.
She shook an odour out on the wind to scent it,
She bent to the barberries and I heard her speak.

I saw the rain go by like a girl with laughter,
But I will never tell you the word she said.
That you must hear yourself and for ever after
Know how the leaves and grass are comforted.

I stood at a bend in the path and the rain went by me,
I could see, like a skein of silk, her shining hair.
She passed with a little smile to satisfy me,
For all the while she knew that I was there!

WHEN a man and his wife thoroughly understand each other, Love bids them adieu.

THE woman who has lost her reputation loses another one trying to get it back.

THAT love is eternal which begins with a desire never attained.

DAWN

By Donal Hamilton Haines

I

"THE tendency of crowds is to be swayed by all sorts of facile emotions, largely superficial," droned the voice of the professor of sociology, but Michael's attention wandered, although the professor was an authority of international reputation.

There were so many things to think of beside the facile emotions of crowds. It was late February, the rather stupid beginning of the second semester, dark, forbidding, dreary, yet somehow touched with the promise of spring. One could think of pleasant things in store, even though yesterday and to-day had been grey enough and to-morrow might very well be like them.

He could let his mind dwell upon the certainty of finding a little heap of letters from people he liked waiting for him in his room when he finally escaped from the "facile emotions"; of the grey spring suit at Wadsworth's which he had already bespoken; of the huge briar pipe laid aside for him at Jolly's, to be smoked for the first time on that distant day when he broke training. And always, of course, there was the thought of his running.

For Michael's legs were no longer strictly his own. Having for two successive years proved that they could get over a half-mile of cinder track faster than any other pair of collegiate legs in the country, they had become, in a sense, the property of the university. And because of them Michael had had to shoulder certain responsibilities not wholly pleasant, even though they were a mark of honour. He had, during most of the year, to leave his tobacco-pouch lying empty and flabby on the top shelf of his bookcase, to forgo the excellent coffee and all of the most attractive desserts, to snap off his light at half-past nine on those spring nights which are most alluring.

Letting his mind dwell on such pleasant matters, and even play a little with that vast and engrossing field of conjecture which lay beyond commencement (now only a few short months distant), he stared idly about the big lecture-room.

Unconsciously his glance came to rest upon a girl's forearm encased in a glove of rich brown kid, fitting snugly and reaching to the elbow. He continued to stare at it, at first with no more than a vague sense of satisfaction, such as he might have experienced at the sight of a well-bound book or a soft-toned picture of an empty landscape. Then he began to consider it as a glove upon a woman's arm and it became even more satisfying. It was, he felt, so exactly the right colour and texture, it wrinkled in just the right places and in others lay taut and smooth with a pleasant suggestion of firm flesh underneath. And it was turned back so neatly to give freer play to the white fingers which gripped the barrel of a fountain pen.

All this was natural and obvious enough thinking for idly speculative twenty; but here Michael did a queer thing. He did not let his eyes travel up to the girl's face, but kept them upon her gloved arm. From it he constructed the girl as he felt she must be to wear a glove so impressively. After a bit he stretched out his hand and picked up his pencil and his neglected

notebook, across whose page a nervous, wriggling line marked the end of his interest in the emotions of crowds.

Beneath this wavering mark he wrote "Lines to a Lady's Glove," smiled a little to himself, and then wrote

> "Lifeless a time ago you lay
> Amid some tradesman's dull display,
> Nor guessed what treasures you might hold,
> Until to Phyllis you were sold."

He paused and considered this critically, never in his life having written anything of the sort.

"Why 'Phyllis'?" he asked himself. "Never knew a girl named that. Must have been invented for just such purposes. Fits in."

Then he set down the second stanza:

> "And, though your heyday be a thing
> Of too brief moments, yet the sting
> Of early death is drawn, you've kissed
> The smooth, fair flesh of Phyllis' wrist."

The clanging of the library clock, the shuffling of many feet and the moving of many bodies announced the end of the hour, but Michael sat still for a few seconds reading what he had written, startled by an unaccustomed thrill of accomplishment. When he slapped shut the covers of his book and glanced up, he saw that the professor had left his desk, the big room was nearly empty—and that Phyllis had left behind her a book on the arm of her desk.

Now Michael had penned his verses with no other thought than satisfying the moment's mood, but the sight of the abandoned book proved too great a temptation. He suddenly felt that the verses were a stupid waste of time unless she saw them, and very deliberately he tore the page from his book. During several extremely self-conscious and difficult seconds he waited until the room was entirely empty, darted across to her seat, slipped the verses into the book, fairly bolted through the door—and almost ran headlong into Phyllis herself. He looked up, caught a glimpse of a lovely, faintly olive-tinted face, large eyes and a mass of black hair beneath the brim of a big hat, blushed furiously, mumbled an apology, and fled.

At this point most young fellows (and, under ordinary circumstances, Michael) would have moved heaven and earth until they had been introduced to the lady of the glove. Not so Michael! He had never read "La Vita Nuova"; his aping of Dante was quite unconscious. But he felt that to take the affair out of the realms of high fancy where it had been born would spoil it completely. A dozen men, the "fussers" of his close acquaintance, would have performed the solemn rites of introduction readily enough, but he did not want them. The thing must run its course upon the high plane of its conception. Even if it went no farther, it was at least perfect in the very faintness of its outline. So much for the softening influence of unwonted versifying!

But from this point Michael and the melancholy Florentine ran widely divergent courses. The tall half-miler wrote no more verses, nor did he grow thin and pale, drooping upon marble benches where she might pass. He worked hard (having faint hopes of one day dangling a golden key at his fob), took those limited pleasures which are given to the driven athlete, and gladdened the heart of the grizzled coach by the performance of his precious legs.

Yet Phyllis was by no means forgotten. She was like a lovely picture hanging upon the wall of his room, his beyond chance of loss. He could look his fill at her four hours a week in the lecture-room (where he no longer restricted his glances to the gloved arm), catch casual and so doubly precious glimpses of her on the campus, and build the most delicately Arcadian dreams in which they two figured.

So gloomy February gave place to boisterous March, March wore to a thin edge, and the seasons altered. The trainer "clocked" Michael's performances indoors and smiled happily to himself—and then Michael, yielding to the first soft breezes of April, took the step which he had not thought to dare. Yet even in breaking the rules which he

had himself imposed he was consistent.

It came about, fittingly enough, in the same lecture-room, while the voice of the international authority was droning of revivalism and its significance. Phyllis had shed the long gloves reaching to the elbow, revealing a forearm even more provocative. Again a wavering scrawl of inattention scarred the page of Michael's notes, and again, after a glance at Phyllis, he turned a clean page and wrote, but this time not in verse.

"Dear Phyllis," he wrote, then nibbled his pencil for a space, conscious of difficulties in his path. Finally he plunged on recklessly.

"For two months now you and I have been playing a pretty game of make-believe in which you have been the silent and unconscious partner. I stand greatly in your debt for the great fun it has been. Very possibly I am making a mistake in writing you, certainly I am in asking what I am going to ask. But, you see, I have you at a disadvantage. If I can't turn make-believe into reality, I still have the make-believe, of which your possible displeasure cannot rob me. On Saturday morning, then, I am going to sit where I can watch the white stone on the second ridge in The Glen, and I hope to see you standing beside it some time during the morning. Of course this is a strange request, but I have a feeling that you will understand it, or that all explanations will be useless. Either things will be or they won't."

He hesitated for a little over the signature, and ended by leaving it unsigned. He could not see that names were of any consequence—and yet he had to get hers for the commonplace business of the mails. On his way back to the room he stopped to buy a single envelope and address it to "Miss Margaret Britt, 1230 Griswold St.," and dropped it through the slit of the postbox as though performing a rite. Then he went to the gymnasium and reeled off four half-miles which made Corcoran, the trainer, writhe in agony of soul.

"What ails you?" he barked.

"Nothing," answered Michael. "Why?"

"You're six seconds under yesterday's time and you run as though nobody'd ever shown you how to handle your feet!"

"Just didn't feel like it, I suppose," Michael retorted indifferently, and started for the showers. But he was not to escape so easily. Corcoran, never dreaming that he was searching for symptoms beyond his ken, grilled him with questions as to food and sleep and work and tobacco, and they parted finally with feelings of mutual dislike, the trainer, of course, having the last word.

"Maybe you don't realize that Jones of Minnesota has done the half three seconds faster than you have, and wasn't pushed either, and that you've got to meet him in May!"

During the following week Michael's running showed no improvement. Most of the time he was exquisitely unhappy, but he had periods of bubbling, hopeful ecstasy. He went so far as to bolt one sociology lecture. To sit there a few yards from his lady, knowing that she had read his note and made her decision, was a little more than he could bear.

On the morning of the fateful Saturday he breakfasted as soon as the dining-room was open and then strode off into the country as though the furies were at his heels. By the time he felt that he could reasonably commence his vigil, he had put half a dozen miles behind him.

Once he was seated with his back against the bole of a friendly oak, the wind ruffling his yellow hair and his gaze fixed on the white stone, he had ample time for thought. During the first hour he cursed himself for a fool, swore that he had ruined everything by his folly, and that he had no reason to expect any sensible girl to meet him half-way in such fantastic nonsense,

He even went so far as to mutter that he would be well served if she spread far and wide the absurd tale of what he had done.

But this gloomy train of thought was not unbroken. Again and again the spell of his make-believe visions asserted itself, he became infused with the fine spirit of the blue-and-pale-green day, and looked for nothing but the sight of her slim figure parting the bushes back of the rock which glittered in the sun.

An hour passed without incident. He had no need to look at his watch. The faint sound of the campus clock, chiming the quarters and booming the hours, reached him clearly. At a quarter to ten a party of engineering students, doomed to a Saturday morning of surveying, invaded the sharp-sided valley between the ridges and drove Michael to despair, but happily, after sticking up picturesque but annoying red-and-white rods and flapping their arms at each other in pointless fashion, they pulled up their stakes and went away. At a quarter past ten a man and a girl appeared beside the white stone. Fortunately the man was first to appear, so that Michael's disappointment was not as great as it would otherwise have been. But selfishly unmindful of his own state, he cursed the engrossed pair up hill and down during the interminable twenty minutes that they loitered about the rock, feeling certain, when finally they had gone, that his lady had been there all the time and that their presence had frightened her away.

By half-past ten Michael had been reduced to a state in which hope fought a losing battle with insistent commonsense. Then, just as the distant clock hammered out the three-quarters, a robin, which had been sitting silent and contemplative on a branch above Michael's head, gave a chirp, darted across the valley and alighted on the white stone.

"The nerve of the fellow!" muttered Michael, scenting sacrilege.

The robin, apparently unconscious of having caused displeasure, fronted his red breast to the sun, threw back his head and sang. Presently there was a flutter of wings in the bushes behind him, and a second robin, duller of plumage, more demure of manner, dropped to the ground beside the songster. Michael, hung on an emotional hair-trigger, accepted the omen joyfully.

"By George, she came!" he exulted. "So will my lady come!"

But for all his confidence, when the two robins suddenly whisked away in twittering fright, the bushes parted and Margaret Britt stepped out into the open, Michael caught his breath sharply and rubbed his eyes, for he was at one of those strange points in life which few mortals touch—where the stuff of dreams merges into the coarser fabric of every day. For an instant he did not move, but stood staring at her. She came forward without hesitating, sat down upon the rock, and brushed back the hair from her face with a gesture which Michael had come to know.

He waited no longer, but sprang forward, waved his hand, plunged down the hill and sped toward her. Anyone less straightforward, less completely in the grip of a great joy than Michael would have had time for quick misgivings, would have searched wildly for words even as he ran. But he went straight to her, his cap in his hand. She did not rise nor smile, but watched him come.

"I don't know exactly how to thank you!" he said.

Then she smiled.

"I'm not sure that I want to be thanked," she answered. "You see, I don't know yet whether I have come to punish you or not. Can you be sure that I haven't six stalwart admirers hidden behind me waiting to destroy you?"

Michael considered this gravely.

"Of course I can't be sure," he admitted. "But I don't think you'd punish presumption that way, when all you needed to do was just not to come."

"I think," she decided, "that you have earned the right to sit down and

talk to me. I shan't order my six retainers to fall upon you yet awhile."

So Michael sat down and clasped his knees and talked with all the candour of an open nature. He told her very simply about the Arcady where he dwelt, and she told him that she had known who had sent the verses the instant she coupled the finding of them with his headlong escape through the doorway and the exceeding redness of his face at the encounter.

They talked for an hour, and in sixty minutes, when there are few pauses, much may be said. At the end of that time she rose and smiled at him enigmatically.

"Well?" Michael put all his uncertainty and hope into the single word, and she laughed at his boyish eagerness.

"I think," she said, setting his doubts at rest, "that I am going to call you Michael right from the start. We have rather avoided conventional preliminaries, haven't we? And shall you call me Phyllis?"

He shook his head.

"Phyllis was largely for the sake of the metre," he answered. "I like Margaret better."

On the following Monday, the occasion of his first outdoor trial of the year, Michael ran such a half that Corcoran fell backward off the track railing after looking at the face of his watch.

II

Between that eventful Saturday morning and the Easter holidays lay three weeks, weeks which usually dragged in leaden fashion, leaving the impression of each second on the restless young folk waiting for them to end. Now they seemed to fairly flicker into the past.

Those weeks should surely have made Michael the happiest of men. His name appeared high up in the list of scholarship honours, men said that he was sure to defeat the redoubtable Jones of Minnesota and make a record that would endure for years—and there was Margaret!

But Michael discovered that you cannot blend dream-stuff and reality without having the joints show. Where all should have been perfection, there were flaws which could not be ignored. The youth and maiden of his visions had been untrammelled: they had spurned the earth with unbound feet. How different the actuality! The paths of the new Arcady bristled in all directions with the notice-boards of convention and responsibility. Michael was conscious of clipped wings. The restrictions of his training regime became doubly hateful, the social obligations which kept Margaret away from him and in the company of other men detestable.

When a man is bending all his efforts toward physical fitness, the process begets easy nerves only while its object remains the most desirable thing in the world, and with Michael this was no longer so. The vanquishing of Jones had become secondary to the spending of time in Margaret's company. The inevitable result of all this was that his usually even-tempered nature was fairly turned inside out, leaving all the most sensitive nerves exposed on the surface. The days seemed to be composed of an enormous number of small things, most of which were capable of annoying him, and, as his capacity for irritation by trifles increased, his grip on essentials went the other way. Instead of lying in his bed and enjoying a series of Watteau pictures, he ground his teeth at the thought that Margaret was dancing at the Country Club with Harry Blaine.

The pair of them, in short, had laid hold of the two ends of a rather difficult relationship. They had entered upon a naturalness so extreme as to be almost unnatural. They had hurdled the usual preliminaries of youthful encounter and plunged straight into intimacy. Michael was a little perplexed at finding himself there, and the girl a little frightened. The perfect candour

of that first meeting was difficult to maintain, for that necessitated going forward without ever looking back, and not to look back proved impossible. Pitfalls yawned unexpectedly in paths which promised perfect smoothness. And the increasing jumpiness of Michael's nerves made matters worse.

In those one-and-twenty days which were proving so different from what they should have been, he ran a long gamut of unpleasant experiences, reacting uncomfortably and irritably to the pricks and stings and shocks of unexpected sensations. Where he had thought to spend long, idle hours with Margaret, full of easy speech and silences which needed no words, he was forced to put up with hurried walks in crowded streets, stolen moments, chance encounters, clipped conversations over a telephone wire which left him disappointed and ill at ease. He was baffled, hemmed in, fired with the beginnings of a slow, illogical, impotent anger.

One day during the last week of the term Michael and Margaret took one of their rare walks into the country. At first it seemed to Michael like the beginning of one of those rambles he was for ever imagining and never having. He felt that he was going to break through that impalpable web of irritations which had been closing round him. And then, almost at the outset, she spoiled everything by saying that she had to get back early to dress for dinner.

"Something special?" Michael asked, and then wished he hadn't.

"A dinner-dance at the Theta house," she answered.

All his dull resentment, the feeling of running his head against barriers, returned and engulfed him.

"Harry Blaine's taking you, I suppose?" he asked needlessly.

As a matter of fact Harry Blaine wasn't, and Michael's dream lady would have said so at once and so set his soul more or less at peace—but the dream lady had not been forced to put up for many days with a cross-grained youth whom nothing could please and almost anything could disturb.

"Yes," lied Margaret, and gave him a sidelong look to see how he took it. He took it very badly, in a silence which became deeper and blacker, but showed that he was really hurt and so moved her to pity.

"Oh, Michael," she burst out, "what *is* the matter? Are you going to spoil everything?"

It was a critical moment and Michael knew it. It was one of those crises which, lying half-asleep, he had so easily met with exactly the right word. But now, harried, perplexed, unhappy, his nerves stretched taut as a bowstring, his self-confidence shaken by a sense of things slipping from his grasp, he was incapable of seizing his opportunity. He strode along for a few paces in silence, aware of her nearness and of a sense of impending disaster, of the difference between this moment and what he wanted. His perverse and uneasy brain picked out of her question only the words capable of disturbing him—"are you going to spoil everything?" He flung up his head with sulky defiance.

"Oh, I suppose so!" he said.

Blind, unhappy Michael! Could he only have glanced at her in that instant everything would have been different. For what she felt she could not hide in that precious instant which Michael lost. The corners of her mouth trembled, her eyes softened with a hint of tears, and in them was the undying look of the mother which is in every woman—mingled suffering and appeal. But Michael, kicking blindly at a stick in the path, saw nothing.

"I think we had better go back," she said quietly.

They walked home in silence and stopped in front of the house. It was another moment which might have been gripped, but again Michael failed. She held out her hand.

"Good-bye, Michael!" she said.

Too late her tone cut through all the cross-currents of mood and restlessness to Michael's heart. He heard the

touch of finality, of snapped patience in her words. The kingdom of Arcady suddenly came tumbling about his ears. The broken heart of a boy suddenly choked him, but the pride of the growing man made him stiffen his neck and steady the muscles of his face which had commenced to work like a child's. He took her hand and dropped it.

"Good-bye!" he answered, and strode away without looking back.

He was really conscious of nothing until he stood in his room staring at a heap of letters. Amid a pile of bills and other uninteresting stuff he found a letter from his cousin, Helen Bliss, a breezy, intimate, compelling letter from a young woman who squeezed much joy from life, and who knew very well youth and its susceptibilities.

"*I need a man*" (she wrote), "*for the most glorious house-party that you ever heard of. And I am inviting you at the last moment instead of the first because it has just dawned upon me that you ARE a man! You see, Michael dear, it's been nearly five years and the kid I knew has vanished. If my tired old brain had only worked faster, you should have had your invitation weeks ago, and a dozen letters since asking when you would arrive. And now I shall wire you (collect) every day until you set your suitcase on my hall floor so that you can give me a cousinly kiss—which will be much more exciting from the great Michael Hardy who wins races and has his picture (making horrible faces!) in all the papers. And if you don't come you will quite break the hearts of several pretty women, besides sending your ageing cousin to an early grave!*"

Out of a gloom so thick that he had thought it could never be dissipated, Michael discovered that he was grinning! (It is to be remembered that Michael had just turned twenty.) He was flattered at a moment when flattery was the most healing balm that could have been applied to his hurts. He remembered suddenly how lively and adorable Helen Bliss was, and the prospect of a house-party and pretty women, and Cousin Bob's big car—! He flung open the door of the closet and looked at the new grey suit from Wadsworth's which he knew became him vastly.

"I'm going!" he shouted, and began to pack.

That same afternoon, seated on a mat in the corner of the silent and deserted gymnasium, Corcoran and his assistant, Burke, were poring over columns of names and figures which form, in the language of the initiate, "dope," their purpose being to determine as far as possible the university's chances of winning the Intercollegiate in May. Burke, staring over his superior's shoulder, examined the figures.

"But see here," he protested, "you're only figuring on a second or third in the half-mile!"

Corcoran nodded gloomily.

"Hardy's gone stale!" he said. "Wouldn't surprise me if he absolutely failed to place." Then a note of injured pride crept into his voice and he fairly wailed, "Lord knows what's wrong! A few weeks ago I had him running like a scared antelope, and now, confound him, I could give him ten yards and beat him myself!"

III

MICHAEL leaned against the trunk of a tree, smoking his thirtieth cigarette that day with perfect contentment, and looking at a woman who sat on a log within a few feet of him.

He was convinced that she was the handsomest woman he had ever seen in his life—and many men of riper judgment had shared that opinion. One of them had married her, but the high gods, evidently unwilling that one man should be so fortunate, had sent his motor through a guard-rail.

Betty Hillis was thirty-two (the fact being wholly negligible), very dark, bewilderingly pretty, with a full, rounded figure to match her face, conscious of her powers and extremely good at everything that a man likes to watch a woman do. If Helen Bliss had known

the exact condition of Michael's battered young affections, she would have struck Betty's name off her list of guests, or added to it some man who could meet her on even terms.

On the first day she had discovered that Michael was fairly swept off his feet, and that Betty had evidently decided that a flirtation with this good-looking, yellow-haired boy was exactly what she wanted. Helen fingered her pretty lip and meditated interference. She even went so far as to lay her hand on the knob of Betty's door, but finally turned away.

"I'm neither old enough nor young enough to be a spoil-sport," she said to herself, "but there's not a grain of harm in Betty. Anyhow, Michael will have to learn to take care of himself with women sometime, why not let him begin?"

For five days—pleasurable to all, wonderful to Michael—the eight people of the house-party had disported themselves variously and continuously in and about the big house on the outskirts of the New York suburb. There had been walks and rides and picnics and dances, with meals at every conceivable hour of the day and night. Michael's training rules had been broken into a million pieces. He had smoked incessantly, eaten and drunk when and what he chose, and averaged about three hours' sleep a night.

A beneficent providence had let him do everything in the company of this most glorious creature. She had danced like a fairy, preferring him to all other partners, climbed hills with as little effort as he, beaten him at golf, driven Bob Bliss's big car in a manner which had taken his breath, and seemed to find nothing worth doing either outdoors or in unless he did it with her.

And here it was, the last day of the house-party, and to-morrow she would be gone! It was no wonder that Michael leaned against his tree and looked at her as a man might look at what he knows is the last sunset he will ever see.

"I suppose you know," she remarked, "that we're lost, that we're miles from everywhere, that I'm extremely hungry and that it's quite all your fault?"

"I wish we were!" said Michael.

"Were what?"

"Lost and miles from anywhere."

"You have made me more pretty speeches in five days," she cried, laughing at him, "and done it more awkwardly than any man I have ever known in my life!"

Then she made the mistake of ruffling Michael's hair. As he had been laying wild plans for a moment of this sort for the last forty-eight hours, he did the obvious thing—caught her hands and kissed them. She drew them away quickly.

"Why did you do that?" she demanded.

"I had to," answered Michael.

"I am going to think," she said slowly, "that you did it because you like me and we've had a ripping time together—and you aren't going to do it again!"

To which Michael made no response, and they found the rest of the party with less speech than there had ever been between them.

Dinner that night was a gay affair, for the party was to break up immediately afterward. The Blanchards were to drive to the city that night in their car, taking Michael and Carrie Holt with them, while Betty Hillis and Dick Heath were to leave early the next morning. For this final affair Bob Bliss had provided champagne—which is not the best thing in the world for young men who have been playing fast and loose with their own emotions and just let down after a rigorous period of physical training.

After dinner Michael was like a dog on the leash until he and Betty were in a far corner of the dark porch. Once there he was bereft of speech, conscious of nothing but her nearness and a rather pleasant humming in his ears. When finally he found his tongue, it was the halting, difficult speech of youth, and Betty, who had been a little frightened in the afternoon, decided

that there had been no cause for alarm after all.

It was for this reason that she made her second mistake. She put a hand on Michael's, and the next thing she knew she was in his arms, and his hot kisses were on her face, seeking her lips. Michael was strong and he had taken her by surprise. There were several long seconds during which she could not resist, and Michael, mistaking her helplessness for yielding, crushed her to him with a fierceness that both hurt her and made her angry. She freed herself with a cold fury that he could not misunderstand.

"You cur!" she said.

Now Michael was not a cur, was quite incapable of being one, and the word stung like the lash of a whip. But Betty's temper had got clean out of hand. Because she was more angry with herself than with him, because he had made her ridiculous in her own eyes, she wanted to hurt him, and she succeeded with cruel completeness. When she left him alone on the porch a few minutes later, he looked and felt like the whipped thing she had called him.

Helen Bliss saw the unmistakable signs when her guests were leaving, but held her peace, and hid the twin facts that she was terribly sorry for Michael and furious with Betty.

It was twelve miles from Helen's front door to the Pennsylvania Station, and Blanchard, who was very much in love with his wife, drove slowly. In the back seat beside Carrie Holt were an aching head, slack body and battered spirit that comprised Michael Hardy. For six miles she tried to spur him to speech, then abandoned the effort. It seemed to Michael that he had never endured such a ride, and he wondered why he hadn't before discovered that the Blanchards and Carrie Holt were such disagreeable people. His farewells were feeble and inadequate.

"I can't remember that champagne used to do that sort of thing to me when I was a stripling," Blanchard mused aloud as he drove away, "but one forgets!"

Michael had supposed that he could get a train at once. He found that he would have to wait for an hour and three-quarters, and that the train, instead of making the run in two hours, took three hours and a half for it. He would reach his room about five o'clock in the morning after a sleepless night! He slumped down on the hard bench of the station smoking-room a prey to the gloomiest thoughts to which the flesh is heir.

Five days! No more than five days, and yet they had sufficed for him to commit an incredible number of enormities. He had but to contrast the thrilling, buoyant well-being that had been his when he first rang Helen's bell with his present wretchedness to realize how demoralizing those five days had been. His head hummed and ached, his stomach felt as though for years it had held nothing but indigestible substances, there was a horrible taste in his mouth. And he was supposed to be in training. *Training!* He couldn't run a hundred yards and he knew it. The mere thought of trying to run a half-mile made him sick.

If his physical misery had been the only trouble he could have borne that. But worse still were those horrible last minutes on the porch with Betty. His mind refused to review the details, but the memory acted as a sort of paralysis of horror.

He had broken training, been a fool; worse still, been a beast! By this time every other person at the house-party must know it. That was probably what had ailed the Blanchards and Carrie. And now Helen's door would probably be closed against him for all time. Michael groaned, fumbled in his pocket and drew out a cigarette. It seemed the symbol of all his folly, and he stared at it in disgust, started to throw it away, then lighted it.

"What's the use now?" he muttered.

When, after the passage of ninety leaden minutes, he stumbled into the chill, stuffy, airless smoker, his misery

increased. The sprawling, rumpled figures on the seats, the stale odours, the litter on the floor of the aisle seemed fit surroundings for him. He dropped into a seat, rested his throbbing head on his hand and resigned himself to torment.

He found it! The capacity to suffer dully was succeeded by a torture far more exquisite. The rhythmic clacking of the wheels set themselves to repeating that one of Betty's speeches which had cut deepest and hurt most, thundering endlessly in his ears until Michael thought he would go mad. His brain was ready enough now to flay him by remembering the smallest details—the very feel of her dress and the faint perfume of her hair as he held her, the slight sound of her yielding bodice as he crushed her against him.

He flung himself upright, digging at his tousled hair with both hands, glaring at the back of the seat in front of him. He had made it impossible for him to ever touch a woman again! He could never do it again without knowing what he had been, what he was, what, apparently, he always would be. Margaret—!

He recoiled from the thought as though he had suddenly plunged through the closed doors of a confessional.

"God!" he groaned, dropped his head between his hands and felt no shame for the hot tears which presently trickled between his fingers.

Later his dejection was succeeded by a period of lethargy, during which he tried without spirit to plan what he would do. He felt that it would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to hide his shame from other eyes. It would not have surprised him to look into a glass and see the scarlet brand of it upon his forehead. Of course he would not even attempt the mockery of trying to run. Probably Corcoran would hurl him forth in disgrace at his first appearance.

This spurious purposefulness did not last. Michael's hard thinking only served to set before his eyes the precious things which he had lost. Again the black pits opened and engulfed him.

An increasing air of restlessness among the other passengers, a shifting of positions, grunts, yawns, unwilling movements, roused him. He sat up and stared out of the window.

With a little tingling shock of surprise he realized that he was no longer gazing into an unfathomable wall of blackness; it had acquired depth, substance, his eyes could pierce it. He turned a little in his seat and rested his elbows on the dusty sill of the window.

He was being whirled through a flat country, but no longer a land of indistinguishable shapes and shadows. He saw a row of pines suddenly outlined with startling clearness, a split-rail fence, a nestling house against a smooth hill, one little square of orange marking a lighted window, a thin plume of fairy vapour shredding up from a squat chimney. And back of it a sky of wonderful pallor, of incredible delicacy, not of any particular colour, but a transparent suggestion of all colours, a thing of radiant, virginal, infinitely comforting cleanliness and purity.

Something inside Michael expanded, flowed through his body, left him tingling, clear-headed, pulsing with hope and young life that answered the radiant sky.

"It's the dawn!" he whispered.

Minute after minute he remained with his hot cheek pressed to the grimy window, watching with quick breaths the never-ending miracle of transformation which unfolded before his eyes, the swift, almost invisible changes in the pallid sky, the sweeping away of shadows, the painting of earth's colours anew, the first red shaft of the sun.

Then, very humble, strangely purged of all his miseries and marvellously happy, he stood up, stretched his young body and smiled out across the smiling fields toward the rising sun.

"Margaret!" he said out of his great humility. "Oh, Margaret!"

IV

"In the name of God, where have you been and what have you been doing?" demanded Corcoran.

"Why?" answered Michael, looking up from lacing his spiked shoes.

"Why?" echoed the coach. "Look in a glass and see! Your eyes are somewhere in the back of your head, you're the colour of putty, and I'll bet you couldn't put the points of two pencils together to save your soul!"

Michael caressed one bare leg and stared at the floor.

"I'm anything you care to call me," he confessed. "I have been a fool. I broke training. I smoked, drank, sat up all hours, felt rotten. If you say the word I'll turn in my suit. Or if you say the other word, I'll win the half for you if it kills me!"

From the hardened breast of the coach a great load took sudden flight, but he was too wise to let his relief show in his face.

"If there was another man I could put in the half, I'd fire you and tell the whole campus why," he lied with cheerful bluster, "but there ain't. It's you or nobody, and we need the points. You give me your solemn promise to go straight till the day of the meet and I'll let you run."

So Michael promised and finished lacing his shoes. And from that day he trained as he had never trained before. It was a straight and narrow path, but easy travelling for all that, for Michael fancied that he was making partial expiation by the intensity of his virtuous efforts. The one difficulty now was facing Margaret. He wanted to, he wanted to find her and make full confession, but found it impossible. Even in the sociology lecture-room he would not let himself look at her, but kept his face resolutely away.

Obviously this sort of thing could not go on. He encountered her face to face outside the library, and it was she who stopped when Michael would have raised his cap and gone on.

"Does training hard mean that you have to neglect *all* your friends?" she asked.

Michael was close to melting, but managed to hold himself. It was a poor place, the worst of all possible times (that slothful first quarter of an hour after lunch), but Michael's new way was to tramp valiantly upon his difficulties.

"No," he answered, "it doesn't." He studied the sidewalk for an instant, then looked at her squarely. "My avoiding you has been deliberate, of course. I've been wanting to write, and I think that I shall. You see, Margaret, I've done things that make it impossible for you to have anything to do with me."

She gave him a swift, startled look, her eyes probing very deep.

"You might have given me the chance to judge that," she said.

"Well, I will," he promised, and turned away.

That night he covered many pages of closely written paper with the full tale of his confessions, and when he had mailed it felt better, though rather spent and hopeless. Later, as he lay awake on his pillow, he made his first shy attempt to re-enter the fields of the abandoned Arcady.

She did not answer his letter. He was disappointed, yet not surprised. How could she answer it? What was there for her to say? This was a part of the expected ordeal for which he had steeled himself. He pressed his lips together in a thin straight line.

But three days later he received the briefest of notes.

"*Your letter*" (Margaret wrote) "*is something which I cannot answer. Oh, Michael, you have made both of us grow up! I think perhaps we had better not see each other while we try to think things out. I will try to write again then.*"

Michael slowly tore the note into small pieces and threw them into his waste-basket.

"That," he said slowly, "is a great deal more than I deserve!"

V

In the dressing-room at the end of the great field, Corcoran threw aside all pretence. It would be Michael's last race; when it was over the veteran's hold on him would be loosened for ever. For once they could be man and man, not coach and coached.

"A first," he said, "will win us the meet. A second might give us a tie. Do worse than a third, Mike, and we're gone."

Michael, curled up in his bathrobe and utterly miserable, as he always was before a race, shivered.

"Can I beat Jones?" he asked. "Honour bright now, Tom, can I?"

"Lad, I don't know!" confessed the coach. "He's gone the distance four-fifths of a second faster than you ever stepped it, and they say he's never been forced to extend himself yet. You'll make him run, I'll promise that. Whichever of you wins, he'll hang up a new figure or I'll quit my job. You're in-and-out, Mike. There's days when you could beat him and days when you couldn't."

He paused and rubbed his grizzled chin reflectively.

"There was one Monday—your first day outdoors—you could have given anybody on earth ten yards and beaten 'em!" he said.

Michael frowned. He knew what Monday it was.

A man thrust his head in at the door of the dressing-room.

"First call for the half!" he bawled; then caught sight of Michael and added, "Here's luck, Mike!"

Once out in the open air Michael felt better in spite of the vast crowd which filled the stands. The huge enclosure of green turf was dotted with the moving figures of men in track suits, their shirts splashed with the colours of a hundred universities and colleges. In one corner of the field the endless pole-vault was approaching a close. A band, lost somewhere in the packed stands, was blaring noisily. Michael's appearance drew a roar of greeting.

"There's Jones!" Corcoran said in his ear.

Michael paused in the act of throwing off his bathrobe to glance at his rival, a lean hawk of a man with legs of abnormal length and muscularity, a dark skin and the straight black hair and high cheekbones of an Indian.

Prancing about with high, mincing steps to flex his muscles, Michael became conscious that Jones, huddled on the ground under a gay blanket was watching him with an intentness almost malevolent. He quite understood: he wanted to glare at Jones in the same way. But his tight-strung nerves demanded some relaxation. He walked across to where Jones sat.

"I say," he began abruptly, "let's not go at this thing as though we hated each other like poison! I've been glaring at you and you've glared at me, and it's all nonsense. We're going to have a corking race!" and he held out his hand.

Jones gripped it as he got to his feet, laughing a little with embarrassment.

"Sorry I glared," he said, "but I suppose I did. I feel rotten, you know."

"So do I!" confessed Michael, and they both laughed and felt immeasurably better. Afterwards they pranced about side by side, talking easily, and the crowd, sensing something of what had taken place, cheered them heartily and impartially.

But when the officials called the half-milers to the mark all amity ceased. The smiles vanished from the two cracks, and they went to their places with mask-like faces.

A hush had fallen over the crowd, for everyone realized that upon the result of the half-mile run depended the outcome of the meet, and that in the battle beween Jones and Hardy—East and West—they would probably witness the race of a decade.

From the crack of the pistol, there were only two men in the race. Jones was evidently a very bundle of nerves, the type of runner who must either make the pace or fret himself in an

early struggle for the lead, and a wise coach had instructed him to get away in front. In three great strides he had won the lead, and Michael, a little uneasy at that swift, smooth burst of speed, had settled into second place behind him. He did not like the position; he preferred to hang further back so early in the race, but Corcoran's last word had been "Stay with him!" and he would do it.

Before they had gone fifty yards Michael knew what lay before him. This knowledge was born with the realization that he was already running harder and faster than he had ever travelled before at that stage of a race; that Jones, splendidly confident of the powers of those long brown legs, was going to go at high speed the full distance, as most men run the quarter-mile!

For the first time Michael experienced a twinge of fear. With an effort he tried to fight down the tendency to spurt, and to make himself run more easily—and instantly those flying legs in front of him gained a yard! Michael closed the gap, but that slight feeling of uneasiness increased. Why hadn't he listened to Corcoran? He knew that the coach had been trying to tell him exactly the sort of tactics Jones would probably employ, and that he had not heard a word of it.

A white post flickered past at his elbow. An eighth already! And it seemed as though they had hardly started. If he only knew how much Jones held in reserve! Michael knew that he could hold this pace, but how much more could he do? As if in answer to his question, the brown figure in front of him turned on some untapped source of energy, and the gap between them widened. Michael won back those precious yards as they came down the back stretch toward the roaring stands, but it took fifty yards and cost him a real effort.

Into the wider path before the tossing stands swept the two flying figures, the rest of the field already nowhere. Michael's whole being seemed protesting against the impossible. He was doing his utmost, already straining at a point where he should still have had everything in reserve, and there ahead of him was Jones, striding without apparent effort. The steady roar from the packed throng became in his ears the shout which marked his own downfall. He was beaten!

And then through the clamour his ear caught a faint, clear thread of sound—his own name. He turned his head slightly. His eyes went straight to her as though they had looked through the sights of a rifle. And on her face was the look he had so narrowly missed on the day of their last walk—the look at once of the maid and the mother, mute, appealing, offering everything for the sacrifice she could not make.

"Michael!" she cried, stretching out her hands, "oh, Michael, *run!*"

He staggered a little, wavered in his stride, lost five long yards. A groan went up from the crowd, Corcoran swore a great oath, and Margaret put one hand to her trembling lips. Then Michael caught his stride, threw up his head and ran as he had run so many times with only her to watch him across the misty plains of Arcady.

Corcoran watched while the stands went mad, watched only until that flying, yellow-haired figure was digging its spikes into the black cinders at Jones' side, then actually turned his back!

Burke, the assistant coach, caught at his sleeve.

"Can he hold it?" he panted anxiously.

"Hold hell!" snorted Corcoran. "This race is *over!* Gwan down and hurry 'em up for the two-mile!"

VI

MICHAEL breakfasted early the next morning, because he wanted to be alone. It was very nice to have men pound him on the back and tell him what a marvel he was, but the winning or losing of races had become a matter of such minor importance.

Once outside the house he lighted with a free conscience that huge pipe

which had been waiting for him so many weeks in Jolly's showcase, and strode off toward the open country on those thick legs which were enjoying this Sunday morning a nation-wide publicity.

He reached The Glen, followed the winding path, then, as he neared the crest of the first ridge, stopped short. What if, after all, he was wrong! What if she wouldn't—! A robin in the scrub oak behind him began to sing, and Michael nodded gratefully.

"Right, old chap!" he said.

Then he turned and hurried to the crest. Opposite him the second ridge lay bathed and shimmering in the May sunlight, and yet the white stone did not show as conspicuously as usual because of the spreading skirts of the girl who sat upon it waiting for him.

WINTER

By J. C. Drake

HE sat on one side of the great colonial fireplace and she on the other. The fire had burned low, a dull glowing mass of embers, with an occasional and momentary burst of vermillion flame. They gazed in the grate without speaking, he in his usual aloof and impenetrable way and she with a slight frown. Their thoughts were identical. Each was waiting for the other to go down for more wood.

IN YOUTH

By Oscar C. Williams

WHEN all the world is veiled in dusk for me,
And all the leaves are winged with rusty grief,
I know that I shall be too blind to see
The shadow-passing of a glory brief.

But I shall grope through Memory's realm and so
Will chance upon a golden, world-old truth,
For in the blindness of my age, I know,
That I shall stumble on my youth!

YOU CAN GET AWAY WITH A LOT

By Thyra Samter Winslow

I

DRAKE slouched out of the Star Building and over to City Hall Park. He sat down on the first vacant bench.

So he was fired.

It didn't surprise him, though he didn't like the unattached, foundationless feeling it gave him. He'd rather expected it for a couple of weeks now, ever since he and Colson, the City Editor, had had an argument over a political story. He had been right and of course that had made Colson angry. So, afterwards, Colson had given him the poorest assignments, stories that couldn't possibly run over ten lines when padded. Now Colson had fired him. Of course, he should have had brains enough, when he saw how things stood, to get out and find something else. It was easy enough to see that now. But, when you are lazy, and Drake didn't deny that he was lazy, it's so much easier to keep a job that allows both ends to come within hailing distance than it is to hunt for something new.

Besides, what else could he do? For five years now Drake had been a reporter. He'd been on the staffs of six New York papers. Of course he could always get back on one that happened to have a vacancy, if the man at the desk remembered him favourably or if he made a good impression. Drake had discovered that one paper is pretty much like another, as far as reporting goes. You get a straight salary or a weekly guarantee and space rates. You get fired for almost nothing.

Drake hated it. He knew that, even if he did get another job, in ten years he'd be in the same place. Things had looked pretty rosy when he was on the Dewitt, Missouri, *Journal*, the year he'd left college. He had saved up and come to the city, full of ambition.

Drake smiled cynically and rolled a cigarette. Why, he'd expected to be an editor or a short-story writer or a dramatist, with a success on Broadway, at the very least, by this time. And here he was—reporting. That is, he would be reporting, if he had a job as a reporter. He hadn't even that. He hated the humiliation of going the rounds of the newspaper offices, faking easily-seen-through reasons why he'd left his job on the *Star*, meeting acquaintances and having them know he had been fired and was looking for something again. And, when he did get a job, what would it amount to, anyhow? Getting down at noon, running around until twelve at night, usually, in all sorts of weather, interviewing rude people who didn't want to be interviewed or fawning ones who wanted to be interviewed only too well, being careful not to swallow fake stories and yet being alert enough to catch real ones. Writing the stories on a typewriter that always had nearly everything the matter with it, in an office full of chattering people and the hammering of other typewriters. Poor food snatched at cheap restaurants. He hated all of it. He didn't know anything else.

He'd thought of "the advertising game." A lot of newspaper men went into that, but he didn't know exactly how to break in. It seemed you had to be an experienced advertising writer,

with samples of "copy" to show, before you could get a chance at it, and, if you weren't experienced, it seemed hopeless to try to get an opportunity to get experience.

Drake hadn't written his play yet. He had ideas for two or three that he thought would go big, if he did write them and get them accepted. But, he'd known fellows who had had their ideas stolen, and others whose really good plays had been turned down by manager after manager for years and years. So it seemed hopeless to go about writing a play. And short stories, he'd ground out a few of those, on the uncertain typewriter at the office, one eye on the man at the city desk, while trying to pretend he was busy on a local story. But the stories had come back and finally he had torn them up. It took influence to get stories accepted, he was quite sure of that.

Drake bought the latest edition of an afternoon paper from a newsboy and read it carefully, looking for new stories that had just "broken," for rewrites of old stories, trying to determine by the "style" who had written the various stories. He scowled as he read an interview with a millionaire. He knew that man, a stupid old fellow, full of trite sayings which passed for epigrams. He'd made his money by luck, pure and simple, and now lorded it over those less lucky. There was a story about another man Drake knew, a garrulous fellow, and he, too, had made a fortune through luck and bluff and faking. Now the newspapers were quoting him as great authority, even while they knew he knew nothing at all. That's the way papers did. They didn't half believe the things they printed, but they played the public for fools, just the way the fellows who became millionaires did. It was the thing to do.

Turning the pages, Drake came to the theatrical section and a picture of Rodusha, the Russian actress. He laughed aloud this time. Here was another example of that very thing—bluff. Rodusha was a star now. Three years before, Drake had had a story about her and she'd been a poor little kid in the Yiddish theatre and she'd known nothing about acting then and she knew nothing now. But she had nice eyes and a way with her. She'd bluffed her way up.

It certainly seemed easy enough to make good. And here he, Drake, was, with a dozen times more sense than any of these people, sitting on a bench in City Hall Park with no job and twelve dollars in his pocket—he'd drawn out the rest during the week. If he were a girl now—there were dozens of things like that—why New York was easy. Anybody could bluff New York and get away with it. New York was anybody's oyster.

It was easy enough for a man to get away with things, if he'd put his mind on it—but a girl, nothing to it. Drake thought of the girls he knew—any of them could get away with a lot if she had brains or looks or someone back of her to tell her what to do. There was Myrtle Harper. Drake liked Myrtle better than any other girl he knew just then. He had met her a couple of weeks before and had taken her to dinner a few times at the cheap *tables d'hôte* he frequented. Myrtle, when she worked, was in the chorus. She had never risen to a "city show," but had closed, six weeks before, with "A Night Off," which had delighted the provinces. Drake had met her through Dury Tennant, who had been business manager of the show Myrtle had been in a year before. Drake had happened to be talking to Tennant on the street and Myrtle had passed and stopped and he had met her. He had liked her from the first and had made an engagement to see her that evening. He'd seen her frequently since.

Drake wasn't in love with Myrtle. He preferred girls he considered "higher class," but Myrtle had nice dark eyes and jet-black hair and an impudent manner, and Drake liked a girl who was always ready to go to places and seemed rather grateful for his favours. Myrtle was grateful enough. Nearly all the

people she knew in New York were of her own financial standing. A nice reporter, ready to buy dinners, was not to be sneered at.

Drake felt that Myrtle, now, could be made into almost anything. He knew that if left alone Myrtle would never get much farther ahead. She was slender and fairly graceful, but so were hundreds of other girls. Undoubtedly she could dance pretty well. Drake had danced with her at a cheap roof garden and found her easy to lead. She wasn't the type to attract attention. Thousands of Myrtles come to New York every year and never amount to anything. He knew that, without assistance, Myrtle would probably get a job with another road show or marry some honest enough fellow and settle down in a four-room apartment in the Bronx. Drake had even thought, vaguely, of marrying Myrtle himself. But he didn't want to be tied to an ordinary little chorus girl, poor and unknown, even if she did have black eyes and a saucy way of saying things.

But Myrtle—if someone would take her in hand. Sitting there on the bench Drake mapped out half a dozen future successes for Myrtle. His news sense helped him and two or three of the careers, if worked out properly, might actually have been practical. It was fun, thinking them over, but none was just what he wanted.

He felt hungry, then, and went over to Childs'. He ate two helpings of buckwheat cakes with syrup and drank two cups of coffee. He hated the noise of the dishes, the people who sat near him. Why, with his brains, did he have to eat in a place like this?

II

DRAKE took a subway train up-town. He got off at Forty-second Street and walked over to a Broadway moving-picture house. He knew the manager and always saw the show free. The manager believed in keeping in with the Press. Drake neglected to tell him that he was no longer an authorized representative.

The theatre was one of the more elaborate ones, pleasantly dark and well ventilated. Drake paid little attention to the picture. Why, the star was no better looking than Myrtle, than other girls. She just happened to get in on the ground floor of the picture game. Moving-picture editors used all the stories they could get about her, even when they didn't believe them, though, at that, you can put a lot over on a moving-picture editor. But the dear public—Drake knew it swallowed anything you handed it. You can get away with a lot if you go about it in the right way.

At first Drake didn't know exactly what he'd make out of Myrtle. There were too many people trying to get into pictures. A new kind of futurist art? Acting? Then he decided it had to be dancing. For, in the chorus, she had already learned something and a dancer could fit into a vaudeville or a musical show or anything. Of course, Myrtle mightn't go as big as some of them, but she could get away with a good deal, if he managed things right. Drake had no doubts that Myrtle would do as he told her. She was pretty good about taking advice, he thought, and she could at least see a good thing if she looked at it. Being handed a Success, all planned, with nothing to do but accept it—well, there aren't many girls who would turn that down.

A dancer, then. That was settled. What kind of a dancer, now? First, Drake thought of Russian, on account of the Russian actress. But he had a vague idea that Russian dancers really could dance. He had seen the Russian dancers a couple of years before, and, while he knew that most of the scenery and atmosphere was a bluff—a friend had told him that the best Russian dancers hadn't even come to America, but that America, with its usual stupidity, had bitten at a second-rate company—he thought that the Russians might know something about dancing, they whirled and jumped such a lot. Besides, the Russian craze was about

over. You could say the same thing about the Greek dancers, too, and those in white robes who skipped around to Chopin and Brahms. That stuff was easy, but overdone. Egyptian, old, too, Norwegian, Swedish—somehow, it was hard to make folks take those races seriously, he was afraid. Too many Swede jokes going around. And he was afraid Myrtle wouldn't do Negro folk stuff. And it was too hard, getting real material on Irish or English. Folk stuff, that was it, simple. Why, he had it—Indian—of course!

Drake was excited over his idea. Outside of a few singers and some wild west stuff, the Indian field was untouched. Right at home, too. Pathos, last Princess of her tribe, dying race and all that. Great!

Drake left the theatre and hurried over to the Public Library. He knew the details of getting information at the library. Many a feature story of his had started and ended there, consisting of a hash of information, culled in half an hour from twenty authorities, punctuated with one interview with some person in the lime-light who was willing to be quoted on anything.

In the reference-room, Drake found ten files on Indians. He decided that "Indians—(N. A. Folklore, Warfare)" contained the information he wanted. He copied down the names of about fifteen books listed under "Social life" and took his list to the American History Room, on the left of the reading-room. Here he was soon finding out all about Indians, taking notes on soiled-edged copy paper as he read.

The information was a bit disappointing. He suspected that that was the reason it was still a virgin field. Most of the dances seemed to consist of stamping and muttering. After all, a series of grunts, while walking in a circle, wouldn't enthral even a New York audience, which is usually willing to be enthralled over anything. Still, Princess What-to-do or something like that could give a series of her own interpretations and get away with it, if it were arranged all right.

Drake felt he'd keep himself in the background. If the thing was a success, he'd be right there to get the money. If it fell down, he couldn't lose anything and he would be spared a lot of humiliation. Drake felt that he was well known, a man-about-town. He had met several hundred famous people while on stories, and, while most of them had forgotten him the second the interview was over, he always felt that he had made a lasting impression.

At five, Drake went down to the telephone and rang up Myrtle. He hinted at some great news, gave her directions for finding him at the library and asked her to have dinner with him at six Until then he'd keep on reading.

III

When Myrtle tapped Drake on the shoulder he was seeped in Indian knowledge. He could hardly wait to get to work on his plan.

Myrtle looked rather pale and worn. She had been looking for a job but hadn't found anything. She had on a neat little suit that was beginning to get shiny. Her sailor hat was bent at the edges. Drake couldn't help but compare her, compare them both, to their metamorphoses six months hence.

"Hello, girlie," he whispered, so as not to disturb the other readers, as they passed out. "Up in the air about the big news?"

Myrtle smiled. She was tired, but she knew Drake was a good "meal ticket" and must be encouraged. She was a nice little thing, rather slow and stupid. She was rather ignorant and had some of the littleness that always goes with ignorance. Usually, though, she was pleasant and affable, inclined to be pert and saucy, "good company." Although her humble position showed that she had not mastered the treatment of the opposite sex, still, she knew a few things about men and acted accordingly. The thing she knew best was to let the man do the talking, and, when he wasn't talking, to make him

the subject of the conversation. She could completely submerge herself and usually found it convenient to do so. She would nod sympathetically and say "Yes, yes," as if she knew all about what was going on, mentally busying herself with her own affairs the while.

Now she smiled at Drake.

"You bet I'm interested," she said; "did they put you on the marked money story?"

"Marked money? Oh, yes. Say, kid, I'd nearly forgotten there was such a thing. You are hours behind. The newspaper game is miles in my past. I hardly know what a news story looks like. Listen. This is about you. How'd you like to be a dancer, a big feature dancer, name and pictures in all the papers, interviews with the sob sisters, all that stuff? Sounds good, eh?"

Myrtle smiled. Had the man lost his mind? It was a pleasant idea, of course. She'd let him talk, if he wanted to. She led the way over to the Gardenia Restaurant.

The Gardenia was one of a dozen *table d'hôte* places between Sixth Avenue and Broadway, in 46th Street. It was in the basement, below a Ladies' Tailoring Establishment. The temperature was always too hot or too cold.

A slattern with a foreign accent handed you a multigraphed menu card, already soup stained. You were served on a spotted table-cloth, ornamented with various mysterious condiment bottles which were never used. The nicked china and brassy silver bore the names of half a dozen defunct restaurants. The dinner consisted of a bit of anchovy on a faded lettuce leaf, a watery soup with a few grains of rice at the bottom, spaghetti covered with uncertain tomato sauce, a choice of tough meat or tougher chicken, served with more lettuce, an almost invisible portion of dessert and a demi-tasse.

The restaurant was patronized by cheap theatrical people from the hotels and boarding-houses of the neighbourhood. It made no pretensions at Bohemianism or smartness. It was baldly itself. Drake patronized it because it was cheap and you didn't have to tip unless you wanted to. He knew some of the people who frequented it and his room was near-by. He dined at restaurants farther down-town when he was searching for atmosphere.

Over the soup, speaking hurriedly, a bit grandiosely, he sketched his plan to Myrtle. She was sceptical, unconvinced, unbelieving. She was the type who does not accept spoken things easily, but believes everything she sees in print. She couldn't believe that a success could be planned like this, in cold blood, by a reporter. She had heard of stars made through the "kindness" of theatrical managers. That was different. Myrtle did not let Drake know of her scepticism. After all, what was the use? He enjoyed talking about it. She had no job and very little money. She got most of her meals by dining with a miscellany of men friends and listening, sympathetically, to their conversations. She could listen and smile at anything.

Of course, she was perfectly willing to carry out any of the plans Drake suggested. She had nothing to lose. It might be interesting. It might lead to something, at that. Not what Drake planned, of course, but a chance to get into something pleasanter than a road show. She might meet someone through Drake. Myrtle had no illusions about her own ability. Try-outs had shown her that her voice, while fair, was not exceptional; that she could dance only a little; that her beauty was not remarkable. Like all girls, she had a vague dream that "something wonderful would happen to her." She had gone on the stage in the search. Her ambitions now were a little dulled.

"You see," said Drake, gesturing with his spoon, "the public is easy. They'll fall for anything if it's laid on thick enough. No half-way measures. A New York crowd won't bite at anything cheap. Give them a fake in velvet and satin and they'll go crazy. The genuine thing in a plain brown paper wrapping would go begging. We'll

hand them what they want. You can get away with a lot here in New York. What do you think of it?"

"I think it's simply fine," said Myrtle.

She wondered if the man at the next table really thought he knew her or was trying to start something. He wasn't the kind of a man she was interested in.

"You look the Indian type, all right," Drake went on. "I'll get some more dope out of the library and teach you what to do and say. You can get away with it if you try. You'll be an Indian girl, who has been sent East to school and who wants to go on the stage. Dances and songs that have been handed down to you, with your own interpretation . . . want to help your race be better understood—want to show the beauty and poetry of your native songs and keep them from dying out . . . you know, big league stuff, high brow. First, you'll probably go on some sort of a lyceum circuit—I can fix that. Then, if the managers get a hint, they'll come after you. You just lie low, girlie—and lie—and act modest and shy. Nothing to it. And then, whatever they offer you, say you'll think it over. Don't be in a hurry to sign anything. They'll pretend to help you by giving you as small a salary as they can. I'll write the songs for you or get ahold of some real stuff. Then we'll go halves on the proceeds. How's that? Do you think that's fair?"

"Oh, I think you're simply great. Can you really do it, do you think?"

"Do it? Well, I guess yes. You just watch me. This old town is easy enough to beat. Anyone can do it if they've got the brains and try hard enough. You'll see! How about it—dividing the proceeds—sound all right to you? You can see I really deserve half, my ideas and all."

"Why of course you do. I think you are a wonderful friend to plan all this for me. Half seems just right—real partners. Is half enough for you, do you think?"

"Say, girlie, I wouldn't skin you for anything. Too much of that being done. I'm going to be perfectly fair. Fifty-fifty goes."

IV

DURING the next week Drake worked constantly on the scheme. He'd had other schemes before, with untold wealth only a few steps away, but they had never looked as practical as this to him. He read everything the library had on the subject, information on Indian costumes, dances, colours, songs. He read George Catlin's long narratives and the Camp Fire Book for girls and a dozen things in between. He found a name for Myrtle and thought it a mighty good one—Awinita. It was from the Cherokee tribe and means "young deer." Now let Smart Alecs look that up and try to prove Myrtle wasn't the real thing!

Drake brought books for Myrtle to read and insisted that she read them. They bored her horribly—she preferred the sensational magazines—but Drake was buying most of her dinners for her now, and surely she could do that much in exchange.

Drake was living on borrowed money. He talked vaguely of "a big scheme" to his acquaintances and because he had lent money rather frequently it was easy enough for him to borrow small sums. Of course he could soon pay them all back.

He knew a woman in Greenwich Village who had a Colour Sense. He had never cared much for it nor for her. She wore long, one-piece frocks that resembled night dresses in everything but colour. Now he felt that Lola Deering was just whom he needed. He showed her some pictures and hinted at some of his plans—which would include publicity for her. The things would be paid for "in a couple of weeks, sure."

He took Myrtle to Lola's little orange coloured shop and she was soon in the midst of getting costumed in queer shaped garments of brown and green, some of chiffon, some of heavy, canvas-like material, leather and silver

trimmed, beaded. There were beaded head-bands to match and necklaces and bracelets of silver and turquoise. It certainly was lucky that Myrtle's hair could be arranged in two thick, shining black braids.

Drake looked up Arthur Flecking, a friend of his who wrote songs and had rather a vivid imagination, and the two of them stayed up all of two nights at Flecking's apartment, thrumming chords on the piano, writing music, improvising, stealing, combining. Then Myrtle came to the musician's apartment and they taught her the songs. The two of them helped her with the dances. She was without imagination, but she was supple and graceful and slender and she remembered numerous chorus steps. The dances consisted of a combination of them, poses, gestures.

Soon Myrtle knew the "act" that had been planned for her. First there was a Dance To The Dawn, starting quietly, then, as dawn broke, becoming more and more violent, ending with Myrtle throwing herself in a heap on the floor, arms outstretched to welcome the sunrise. Myrtle didn't see much in this, but it wasn't any more foolish than some chorus work she had done. Next came The Indian Cradle Song. Myrtle carried a doll papoose. This song was a plaintive one, the kind fat men wipe their eyes over.

Then there was another dance, Memories of Autumn, and it was supposed to be descriptive of Indians dancing around the camp fire, tribal songs. The last number was, of course, a love song, The Indian's Wooing. It was the number that, published, would "go big." Drake's imagination, helped by Flecking, had run riot. Drake had ideas for a dozen more things if a change of programme was needed.

Next, Drake planned for a try-out. He could, of course, have arranged for a regular try-out on one of the minor vaudeville circuits. His idea was different. He wanted something "high brow," exclusive. He planned to make those things the secret of the act. He even abandoned the idea of a lyceum as not "class" enough. So he waited. It was harder to borrow money. He was eating only one meal a day, the one he shared with Myrtle; but he didn't mind. It was worth it, he felt. He lived in the future. He made no effort to find a newspaper job, of course. Why should he? Why be tied down to anything like reporting when this was so much more important? What were a few dollars to him?

Myrtle became impatient and she couldn't keep from letting her impatience show a little. It was September and she had let several opportunities slip by. They were not good ones or she would have accepted them in spite of Drake's plans. She was mighty tired of the road and she felt that, after all this preparation—she had worked hard learning a lot of Indian stuff and dances—something ought to happen.

Drake heard of a big charity fête being arranged by one of the less exclusive but rather vivid "society sets." He found out from one of the society editors that the publicity man for the fête was Douglas Scott, a fairly idle and very rich young man, who delighted in doing things like that. Drake didn't like Scott. Didn't Scott take away jobs from striving young men and women, who could get a couple of hundred dollars for the work Scott did for nothing? Scott liked running around from office to office with photographs and news items about bazaars and fêtes, talking to city editors, arranging for "spreads" and "layouts," writing press stories, busying himself over nothings.

Drake telephoned Scott and arranged to call on him. He wore his best suit, a rough grey mixture, and ruffled his rather light hair so as to look "artistic." In Scott's apartment he lounged in one of the big chairs and told of his "discovery."

"I'm a newspaper man, you know, and here's a little girl I just happened to run into—you know how that is. She's the real thing it seems to me, though you never can tell, of course. Anyhow, she's just left school and is

anxious to get into something like this, you know, anxious to get the attention of the right sort of people. Of course, she's anxious to do her share for charity, too. From what I know of her she'll be a real novelty. Here's a picture she gave me for a story and then made me promise not to use it. Can you imagine that? She simply doesn't know the value of publicity. There's never been a word in the paper about her—brand new stuff."

Scott took the idea, of course. He wrote a note to "Miss Harper," the name by which the Princess Awinita preferred the public to know her. Drake and Myrtle had tea with Scott at the Plaza. Myrtle was modest and shy, said "yes, yes" and smiled. She listened rather more attentively than she usually listened. Scott had found that, as usual, the programme committee, just at the last minute, needed another act, so he accepted Miss Harper's offer to give one of her original Indian dances, and perhaps a song, at the Orphan's Fund Fête.

Drake had seen to it that a number of theatrical managers were acquainted with Myrtle's début. He knew that they were all looking for novelties and that if Myrtle was at all good no better way could have been arranged to bring her to their notice.

Drake arrived at the fête early in the afternoon. He knew a number of the women in charge of it and they liked him because on previous occasions he had seen that their pictures were used in his paper. Now he gave the impression that he was "covering" the fête, as usual.

He said nothing about Myrtle's "act." The programme was the smallest part of the fête. It was the audience that counted. The fête was given on the lawn of a large Long Island estate. It started early in the afternoon and lasted all day. It was the usual sort, rather elaborated, a chattering audience, buying expensive flowers and programmes, greeting each other with hysterical camaraderie or affected boredom. First there were "sports," amateur horse showings and even an attempt at a dog show. Then came the entertainment, a few exceptionally poor amateur things, one a pageant done in fearfully coloured costumes, a violinist, the chorus from a popular musical comedy, several "soloists," glad to "donate their efforts for charity," and a "star," the only entertainer paid for her services. Then came a buffet supper at five dollars the plate and after supper there were "fortunes" and "sales" and dancing. The women in charge had worked for several months on the affair.

For the entertainment Drake secured a seat well in the back. He knew that Myrtle was lucky to get this chance. It only proved to him how easy it is to get away with things if you go about it in the right way. He was delighted to see that three important theatrical managers were present, one there through his influence. Another had desires for a social career, the third, poor fellow, was married to a "society girl" and had to be present. Drake watched the gay, chattering crowds. The programme frankly bored him, as it did the rest of the audience, though everyone applauded enthusiastically, even if few knew what was going on.

Drake was rather nervous when Myrtle's turn came. He had told her to act contained, quiet. "The higher-brow the better," he had said. But Myrtle had never been on the stage alone in her life. What if she made a fool of herself, a miserable failure?

But Myrtle didn't. She was more surprised than she cared to admit at getting the opportunity. All through the costuming, the studying, the rehearsing, she had thought the affair a gigantic bubble on Drake's part. She hadn't expected anything to come of it. But now that something had come she took it calmly enough. Like most women she was adaptable. She liked talking to Scott and to the women she met. She fell easily into her rôle.

She came out on the stage quietly, even bashfully. It seemed so silly to do these simple, rehashed chorus steps for these society people—she was

awed by them—to sing simple little songs when she knew neither her voice nor the songs amounted to anything. But she danced and sang. She looked decidedly pretty in her brown costume, emphasized with touches of green, red and orange. Her long black braids, brilliantined and brushed until they glittered, twisted with red and silver, hung on either side of her face. Everyone was rather pleased with the novelty of the thing. Myrtle made a pretty picture. She didn't offend. The applause was cordial and, after the performance, Myrtle got her offer.

V

THE offer came from Lucas, who had social aspirations. Already he had thought of featuring Myrtle as "society's favourite." An Indian dancer with influential friends! He thought he had found something new. But he was a canny fellow and offered Myrtle sixty dollars a week. She could have lived well on that, but only half of it was to be hers, and, though she had never had that much, she wanted more than thirty dollars. Finally she was promised seventy-five and a year's contract.

Drake was disappointed at the amount, though there had been few enough weeks when he had ever made as much as his share of the money.

A week later Myrtle started her new career by appearing in the entertainment given in one of the exploited basement restaurants patronized chiefly by out-of-towners. Drake didn't like this. He wanted Myrtle to be in a "regular show." He knew Lucas had several shows. But Lucas had the Worthing and he had found it difficult to get inexpensive, attractive acts for it. The Worthing had two shows a night, one at the dinner hour, from seven to eight, another from eleven to twelve. It was easy work, Myrtle thought. The show was an elaborated cabaret with a regular stage setting and was advertised as a "pocket sized musical comedy."

Myrtle liked it. It was her initial chance at anything "first class." She watched the women who came to the Worthing and saw how they acted, what they wore, how and what they ate. One doesn't learn these things in a road show. She met a number of men who attracted her and would have accepted invitations from them if Drake hadn't objected.

"None of that stuff, young lady," he said. "We are running this differently. It might be another thing if you didn't have a future. We want to get ahead, make money. You've got to keep up this Indian Princess stuff, this simple, just-out-of-school stuff, even off stage. Exclusive, it's the only way. Make yourself hard to interview. Look at Maude Adams and where never granting an interview got her. Be mysterious. Don't let people stare at you when you're not working. What's the use of paying to see you, then?"

Myrtle took his advice, though she thought him unnecessarily strict. She longed for "style," for extreme things, but wore inconspicuous clothes. She found you couldn't do much on thirty-seven dollars, anyhow. She went to a better boarding house. It never occurred to her to resent giving Drake half of her salary. She was grateful to him and entirely under his influence. She was still amazed at him and at herself too. To think that she could get ahead like this!

Drake, of course, did not work. Why should he, with more money than he had ever had and with chances for still more. He bought loud, cheap, loose-fitting clothes, slept late and spent his time in the lobbies of the hotels, reading all of the editions of all the papers, making stray acquaintances, talking to men he knew, drinking occasionally. Sometimes he thought up something new for Myrtle's act, making a great thing of it as he taught it to her. He didn't see many of his old friends and it never occurred to him to pay back the small sums he owed them.

In less than six months Myrtle had a better offer. It was from Herbert Fredone. He offered her a position

with his new musical comedy, "Come On In." Myrtle talked it over with Drake and he found that a little matter of a contract need not worry her. It would give her a little more publicity and she certainly needed it. Contracts always have holes in them, some place.

Myrtle opened in "Come On In" with a salary of a hundred and fifty a week. She took an apartment in West Seventieth Street, sharing it with Florence Montague, a girl in the same show. They had a coloured maid, who, besides taking care of the apartment, accompanied them to the theatre and helped them dress.

Myrtle's new act had a "Memories of Indian War" in it. Otherwise it was much as Drake had first planned. Fredone arranged a good-looking back drop and some effective lighting.

Drake, with seventy-five a week, was well satisfied with himself. He grew a little fatter and began to brag. You certainly can get away with a lot in New York. He hinted at various things that lay just in the future. Now, when he had energy enough, he enjoyed "putting across" some of the press stories he had planned. He knew people on all the papers and had no difficulty in landing most of the stories, for they seemed to have real news value. Myrtle, as "one of the last princesses of her race," was an appealing figure. She was quoted on music, on art, on the modern girl. She gave health rules for life in the "great outdoors" that "her people had used for generations." She took a group of little Camp Fire girls on a scouting trip, teaching them "Indian secrets of the woods," accompanied by a newspaper photographer. She talked of Indian symbolism and Indian poetry. Soon her salary was two hundred dollars.

Myrtle didn't save much of her money. She had rather a good time, though not nearly as good as she felt she could have had. After she became accustomed to a comfortable apartment, nice clothes and good food, she began to chafe under the restrictions Drake put on her. She enjoyed sleeping late in the morning, having her breakfast brought to her bed, wearing chiffon negligées at home and correct things on the street, eating chocolates, shopping, afternoon teas.

She met "interesting" men occasionally; but instead of "jollying" them, going to late suppers, laughing and being "cute," as would have been natural for her, she had to follow Drake's instructions and be "high brow."

As time passed she disliked Drake's treatment of her and the things she had to do more and more. She felt that Drake didn't take as much interest as he ought to, in the act. Now, he seldom gave her anything new. Fredone added all the new material. Drake's press stories became fewer and fewer and of less and less importance. It annoyed her, terribly, the way he dwelt on each little story he landed. Fredone's regular press agent got her much better publicity. And still Drake hung around and got his money and gave her lessons in deportment. She quarrelled with him frequently now.

"Look here, girlie," he said, when he called one afternoon. "You certainly are getting away with a lot, aren't you? Whenever one of these big stories comes out I can hardly keep my face straight. You certainly landed soft. A year ago you and the Ritz were strangers. And look at this apartment. You certainly have got a lot to be thankful for."

"I'm satisfied, all right," said Myrtle. Florence had gone on the road with another show and she had the apartment to herself. She did have a lot to be thankful for. But, didn't she work hard for it? The "big story" was one Fredone's publicity man had done. What did Drake do, except talk?

"It seems to me," she added, "I'm missing out on a lot, though. I'm sick of the things you call 'high brow.' You have a good time, playing cards and drinking with all the fellows. I have to sit at home and read about Indians."

"Read on," laughed Drake. "You ought to thank your stars for the chance. Look how New York is eating up this stuff. Isn't it great? Didn't

I tell you they would? Why, when this idea first came to me . . ."

Myrtle was thinking of Peabody Ellison. She'd met him a few weeks before, through Douglas Scott, whom she saw occasionally. Drake wouldn't find out if she went to dinner with Ellison. What if he did find out? After all, Drake wasn't her boss. Why—it didn't occur to her—until just this minute—how terribly she let Drake treat her. And here she was, giving him half of her salary. And he didn't do anything for it but sit around and quarrel. Why, for a month he hadn't done a single thing. A bluff, was she? She didn't know about that, at all. Why the papers were full of her, and, in spite of what Drake said, she knew they wouldn't print things about her if she wasn't awfully good. She was mighty clever and she knew it. If Drake didn't stop trying to tell her what she could do . . .

Drake was still talking. Myrtle nodded and smiled at his words. It seemed easier. She hated to start quarrelling again.

But, later, Myrtle thought about things. Well, she had been easy. . . . Drake didn't quite own her, though he seemed to think so. She met Ray Carnahan, a writer. She listened attentively, when he told her she didn't get enough publicity, publicity with "pep" in it. He suggested that he take her press work, but she said she had a press agent. But Ray Carnahan, why, he'd written a book and now did movie scenarios and knew everyone. And, here, Drake hadn't even been able to keep a newspaper job and now didn't do anything but live on the money she gave him. . . .

VI

THREE months later Fredone put Myrtle in his new midnight show on the Brewster Roof and gave her a chorus of six girls, all with shiny black hair and eyes. He had a new song written for her, "Good Little Indians," and didn't tell her about the way he had got away with it because of its pretended symbolism. It was a good "jazz" number. Fredone gave her a nice raise, too.

Myrtle didn't tell Drake about the new raise. She was sorry she had told him about the last one. Why, if her friends knew about Drake . . . She was getting rather particular about the people she knew, even.

Why had she let Drake put things over her this way? He was always telling her what to do and what not to do . . . and he was so ordinary looking, wore the wrong kind of clothes, no "class."

Myrtle had a talk with Ray Carnahan about things. Ray was willing to take her press stuff for fifty a week—he was writing scenarios too.

"I'll tell you the truth," he said, "the public are interested in live, up-to-date publicity. The stories Fredone has about you are good, of course, but you don't get enough. But that other stuff—awful. It isn't for people who come to the Brewster Roof. You don't care what old maids in Detroit learn about Indians."

Myrtle agreed with him. There must be a lot of good things about her that Drake hadn't written about. Why, a girl like her . . .

Myrtle was working awfully hard and she didn't see why she shouldn't have a good time. She liked Peabody Ellison quite a lot and several other men she'd met. She had little enough time for them; but, when she did have time she didn't refuse their invitations. She knew that other girls would be mighty glad to get her chance to meet the right sort of fellows. She forgot all about Princess Awinita off stage. She found she didn't need her any more.

Drake called one Sunday in September. Myrtle was in her new apartment—the old one had become too small and cheap. She was angry because several little things had kept her from spending the week-end in the country, she had planned to go out Saturday night after the show. Drake was in a bad humour, too. He'd got into a sort

of a club a few months before and played cards a good deal. There were pretty steep games, usually, on Saturday nights, and last night he'd lost all of his week's "salary." And some people had told him they'd seen Myrtle at a Long Island road house with a gay motor party. He thought he'd have to marry Myrtle so as to have the money in his own hands and manage her better. She was a stupid little thing and rather ungrateful for all he'd done, but she was rather agreeable about most things.

"I say, Myrtle," he said. "What's this about you running around with that Foster crowd? Heard you had dinner with Foster and Johnnie Woods and that Ellison fellow three days running. Those 'younger sons' haven't any too good a rep, you know. And one of those nasty little society and stage papers—I didn't get the name of it, but I'm going to find out—had a mean article in about you. And you wouldn't see Miss Simmons of the *Record*, after I went to work and arranged for her to have an article about Indian beadwork for her Woman's Page."

"Damn Miss Simmons," said Myrtle, kicking out one satin mule and taking another cigarette. "Damn beadwork! You must think I've got nothing to do but read up on beadwork. I'm sick of it. What's the use? New York doesn't want to be bored with that fool Indian stuff. They don't care anything about all that rot. New York isn't as easy as you think it is. They like me and they like my work. Fredone said that the new Indian Sign number is the hit of the show. I'm going to carry it over to the new review. It's me the public wants, not a lot of things out of school books."

"You mean to say"—Drake sputtered, almost speechless, "you, you mean to say that New York—that we haven't bluffed them? What—what do you call yourself? A bluff, that's what you are and you know it. I'm glad of it. It proves my theory. You know what I've always said: if you've got the brains you can get away with anything in New York. Why, if it wasn't for me you'd be stalling around in the provinces wondering whether your show would last long enough for you to draw another eighteen per. Here you're getting a hundred and fifty—you aren't getting more and putting something over on me, are you?—and trying to tell me about bluff."

Myrtle was too warm and annoyed to be amused or to go on peacefully with her own thoughts. After all, this was a good time. Why not settle it?

"You make me tired," she said. "You say such stupid things. The public doesn't care whether I ever saw an Indian or not. It goes all right on the stage, so I keep up the pose. As for stories, you don't know the kind I need. After next week I've arranged to have a new press agent. I'm tired of being told what to do—of the whole thing. I know my work and where it's got me"—she really believed this—"and I won't take advice all the time. You've been a good friend and all that, but you're a luxury I can't afford.

"You've been grafting half my salary because you happened to help me along a little when I started out. I didn't mind it, for I felt I owed you something; but I think we're about square. I've done more than my share and now we're quits. New York may be as easy as you say it is—but I'm not. As you're always telling me, you can get away with a lot—but enough's enough."

VII

DRAKE sat on a bench in City Hall Park and read the latest edition of the *Star*. He wondered if Fredericks was working on that merger story. That reminded him, he never had paid Fredericks that money he'd borrowed. Oh, well, he'd pay him as soon as he got a job, the others, too.

So, Jackson would clean up a million on the merger! Luck and bluff would get you pretty nearly any place in New York. You could get away with an

awful lot here. Why, right now, he knew a couple of schemes, that, if you worked them out properly . . .

He turned the pages of his paper. The Waring story . . . that reminded him—Henderson had taken Colson's place on the *Star*. A good fellow, Henderson. Guess he'd go over and ask him for a job on the paper—until something better came along. . . .

ONE INDIVIDUAL'S WAY

By Max Saher

HE insulted them all at will. His insults, clever and well directed, went home like stinging blows.

And yet! The widow smiled on him. The grass-widow sent him daily a rosebud. His brother-in-law laughed vociferously at his old-time stories. His sister-in-law beamed on him. His lawyer got busy on sight of him. The bartender opened special bottles for him. The Winter Garden girl blew kisses at him. His barber threw in a massage. The elevator boy left his cage to run errands for him. His best friend let him take his beautiful wife to the opera and supper.

He had lent them all money.

TRIOLET

By George B. Jenkins, Jr.

IF somewhere in my poetry
Her beauty blossoms from the page,
A glimpse so clear that all may see—
If somewhere in my poetry
I mirror my divinity,
The lines will never fade nor age.
If somewhere in my poetry
Her beauty blossoms from the page.

A SUCCESSFUL lover is a man who began by making the woman work hard to get him.

LIAR: one who views the truth humorously.

THE OBTUSE GENDARMERIE

By John F. Wellman

I WAS cleaning my forty-five calibre automatic pistol when she tripped into the room. She always seemed to take a peculiar pleasure in watching me doing anything of a mechanical nature. On this occasion she bent in front of me and looked fixedly into the mouth of the pistol.

"What would happen if it went off?" she asked playfully.

They arrested me for showing her.

HOUSES

By Leslie Nelson Jennings

THREE houses on a dusty road
And there is one where I
Can stop and sip a cup of tea
And watch the world go by.

Three houses on a dusty road,
As any man may see;
But O, their windows in the dusk
Are stars of heaven to me!

Three houses on a dusty road,
And poplars in a row,
And words that bring to me again
Old wisdom good to know.

Three houses on a dusty road . . .
(The geese went by to-day)—
But what if I should drink my tea
And never go away!

REVENGE:—Giving the silk stockings a man has given your wife to his wife.

LA PIPE

By Albert Terrade

CECI se passait le 25 avril 1863; après un formidable coup de mine, un pan de mur s'écroula et mit à découvert le couvent de Santa Inès, citadelle des mieux fortifiées de Puebla. Deux colonnes de zouaves sont lancées contre les Mexicains, rien quê de vieux soldats de quinze à vingtcinq ans de service, tous des lapins qui n'ont pas froid aux yeux. Dans cette troupe d'élite se trouvait le sergent Bournet, qui avait guerroyé en Afrique pendant vingt ans et, ce jour-là, il avait obtenu de prendre part à l'action, alors qu'il aurait dû rester à la garde du camp, parce que son capitaine, le brave et bon Faillot, était désigné pour faire partie de la colonne d'attaque.

Il y avait bien dix ans que Faillot et Bournet ne se quittaient pas. A toutes les affaires qui s'étaient succédé sur le sol africain, on les avait vus là tous les deux, toujours des premiers, dès qu'il y avait un coup de torchon à donner quelque part et, dans le feu du combàt, on n'entendait que cet appel du capitaine: Bournet, es-tu là? — Oui, mon capitaine. — Bien, cogne ferme sur l'Arbi, ça va bien, ça va bien. . . . Et le soir, on revenait ensemble au camp, quelquefois indemnes, souvent avec ce qu'ils appelaient une égratignure, mais ceci n'avait pour eux aucune importance.

Malheureusement tout dans ce bas monde, a une fin; elle arriva au Mexique. Côte à côte, Faillot et Bournet, et tête de le colonne attaquante, se lancent à l'assaut du couvent. L'affaire est chaude, on lutte sans grands avantages; les Mexicains, des braves eux aussi, du haut des terrasses, inondent les Français de biscaïens, de balles et de mitraille; on riposte, on tient, mais c'est tout. Et, de temps en temps, on entend tout de même la voix de Faillot: Bournet, es-tu là?—Oui, mon capitaine . . . et le combat continue.

Tout à coup, au moment où le général de Castagny donne l'ordre de sonner la retraite, le brave Faillot, n'apercevant plus son sergent enfoui comme lui dans la fumée, lance son cri de ralliement: Bournet, es-tu . . . et il n'alla pas plus loin; une balle dans le ventre le couche à terre. Bournet, derrière son capitaine, le voit chanceler et s'abattre. D'un bond il est sur lui.

— Foutu, ça y est!

— Crénom, mon capitaine . . .

— Assez, je vais claquer, je le sens, supprimons les mots inutiles. Pas de famille et je n'ai rien, tu le sais; si j'avais quelque chose, ce serait pour toi. Prends là, dans la poche de derrière de ma tunique, ma pipe, ma vieille pipe en bois au bout d'ambre, garde-la toujours jusqu'à ta mort, en souvenir de moi. Allons, embrasse-moi . . . qui sait? on se retrouvera peut-être un jour!

Bournet a terminé son service; il prend sa retraite chez sa sœur Mariette, plus vieille que lui de deux ans, mais il emporte du régiment deux souvenirs qui atténuent un peu son chagrin de quitter l'armée et les vieux compagnons de guerre: la médaille militaire, valeureusemente gagnée, et la pipe de son capitaine.

C'est tout près de Tours qu'il vivra dèsormais, à Cinq-Mars-la-Pile, au pied des ruines du château démantaté de l'ancien favori de Louis XIII. Qui reconnaîtrait maintenant le vieux zouave d'Afrique et du Mexique! Usé, cassé, manquant d'espace et de camarades, il s'efforce de travailler dans le jardin de

sa sœur, restée vieille fille. Ils s'entendent bien tous les deux, c'est vrai, mais quand on a vécu là-bas, derrière les montagnes de l'Atlas, on s'accoutume difficilement à nos paysages un peu gris de France et le vieux sergent, pour ne pas faire de peine à sa sœur, refoule ses pensers, se morfond, se tait et regrette!

. . Il regrette le désert, et ses oasis; il regrette Alger avec ses mosquées si blanches, sa kasbah tortueuse et sale, et le ciel limpide dont le bleu se confond avec celui de la mer à la limite de l'horizon. Il ne peut pas s'accoutumer à ne plus guerroyer avec son capitaine et la vie lui serait tout à fait insupportable, s'il n'avait pour se consoler cette pipe qu'il fume avec un soin religieux. Il ne la quitte jamais, et la nuit, quand il s'éveille sous l'empire des souvenirs, quand il entend l'appel: Bournet, es-tu là? alors il la prend sur la table de nuit, la bourre et la fume dans le silence et les ténèbres et dès qu'elle ne lui donne plus une seule bouffée, il la remet à sa place consacrée, bien emmaillotée dans son étui usé et s'endort calmé en murmurant: Adieu, mon capitaine. . . .

Trois ans de cette existence concentrée ont complètement abattu le pauvre vieux et, n'étaient la moustache et l'impériale, ce palladium des soldats du second Empire, on le prendrait maintenant pour un paysan brisé par la terre. Les blessures qui se rouvrent, les fièvres qui le minent, les douleurs qui lui arrachent des cris, ne lui permettent plus guère de se lever. C'est la mort qui s'approche et Mariette ne se fait plus d'illusions. Elle souffre elle aussi, en silence; ne s'est-elle pas attachée à ce frère depuis qu'ils vivent tous deux sans se quitter jamais? Ensemble on causait du père et de la mère, des parents et amis disparus, tous maintenant couchés à jamais dans le cimetière du pays, et le soir, à la chandelle vacillante, dans la vieille bicoque ancestrale, on rajeunissait un peu à l'évocation des années d'enfance et des récits de campagnes de l'ancien zouave. Elle ne s'y trompe pas; tout cela rentrera bientôt dans le domaine des souvenirs et des larmes!

Et voici qu'un jour, alors que rien ne pouvait faire prévoir une fin si rapide, elle entend la voix de son frère: Mariette, viens vite. Elle accourt. Dès qu'elle le vit, elle comprit, c'était la fin; les yeux hagards se retournaient et la sueur inondait son visage.

— Mariette, Mariette, je meurs, je meurs, vite ma pipe, ma vieille pipe, ici, dans ma bouche. Elle la lui met entre ses deux lèvres et le pauvre moribond, qui déjà délire, veut la soutenir avec sa main, mais les forces lui manquent et celle-là, sous l'impulsion du bras qui retombe en dehors du lit, se brise sur le carreau de la chambre en même temps que Bournet, répondant sans doute à une voix intérieure, s'écrie: J'y vais, mon capitaine.

Le vieux sergent avait cassé sa pipe.

A MAN will try to marry the girl he loves—a girl will try to love the man she marries.

HANDSOME MEN

NOTHING so improves personal appearance as that slight smooth tan which comes with exposure to the sun and air.

"SUNBRONZE DE LUXE"

gives a perfect simulation of this tint, is undetectable, perfectly harmless, and absolutely genuine, to which its 5,000 testimonials received from every quarter of the globe is sufficient evidence. Unique in method and perfection of result, SUNBRONZE DE LUXE has stood the TEST OF TIME. Forwarded free from observation, price 10/6 (*Mark II de Luxe*, 3 guineas). Fresh Complexion Tint for Ladies, on same principle, at same prices. Direct from

Sunbronze Laboratories, 157, Church St., Stoke Newington, London. (*Established 1908.*)

This Dainty Cream brings added Charm to any Face

Pomeroy Day Cream is, of all "vanishing" creams, the most delightful. It has a lovely effect on the skin, and is so fragrant and refreshing that one wants to be using it always. Being non-greasy and vanishing, it can be used any time, any day. The more you use it, the better for the skin, which is rendered soft, smooth, and fresh, and is protected against wind and weather.

Pomeroy Day Cream

In dainty half-crown vases at high-class Chemists, Perfumers, etc.

Mrs. Pomeroy, Ltd., 29 Old Bond Street, London, W. 1.

Face Treatments and the Successful Treatment for Superfluous Hair, at above address and branches.

FOR ALL CONDITIONS OF

HAIR TROUBLE

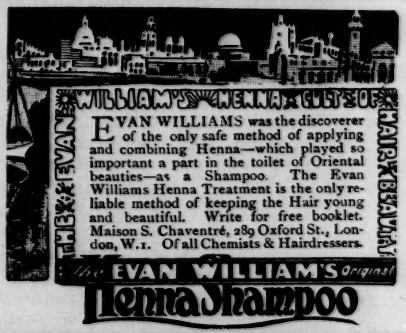
WRITE or CONSULT

M. DE NEUVILLE

52 BROMPTON ROAD

LONDON, S.W. 3

ALL CASES INDIVIDUALLY DIAGNOSED UPON A MEDICAL BASIS, AND TREATMENT COMPOUNDED UPON THAT DIAGNOSIS ON PROGRESSIVE AND ECONOMIC LINES.



EVAN WILLIAMS was the discoverer of the only safe method of applying and combining Henna—which played so important a part in the toilet of Oriental beauties—as a Shampoo. The Evan Williams Henna Treatment is the only reliable method of keeping the Hair young and beautiful. Write for free booklet. Maison S. Chaventré, 289 Oxford St., London, W.1. Of all Chemists & Hairdressers.

A Permanent Youthful Appearance.

Mrs. ADAIR'S

EASTERN MUSCLE OIL

TRADE

MARK.

Removes all Lines, Fills out Hollows, Gives and Retains for you a Good, Clear, Healthy and Natural Complexion.

Nearer to the Natural Oil of the Skin than any yet invented. *Reaches the Muscles and Tissues, and is a Youth Restorer.*

Original and Unsolicited Testimonials can be seen.

Prices 12/6, 21/6, and 35/6. Small Sample Size, 5/6. Largest Size sufficient for One Year.

Adair Ganesh Establishment, 92, NEW BOND STREET (Oxford St. End.) LONDON, W.

Telephone—GERRARD 3782. Also PARIS and NEW YORK.

ABOUT FASHIONS AND OTHER THINGS

By Various Hands

Frocks and frills are coming into their own once more, for with the return of our menfolk it behoves us to make the best of ourselves, and surely we deserve a little fling after our long years of separation from them and from Madame Fashion. The shops are full of the daintiest of evening frocks, which promise to be much in demand this winter; but among all the delicious tulle and georgette frivolities, the more sedate frock that is trimmed with jet holds its own very successfully. It is its season. Where it has all come from it would be difficult to say, but the fact remains that never, never—not even in the days of our dear old grandmothers with their bugle capes and poke-bonnets—has there been so much or such beautiful jet on the market. One of the loveliest models that I can call to mind at the moment was built entirely of layers of black net heavily draped (I can find no better word) with massive festoons of jet. The shoulder-straps, however, were of grey tulle worked in steel beads. These gradually shaded downwards and melted into deepest black somewhere about the elusive waist-line. Another extremely pretty evening frock was carried out in shell pink charmeuse with a loose overdress of very transparent chiffon, thickly encrusted in mother-of-pearl beads. The sleeves were very artistic, being a large square of chiffon folded corner-ways over the top part of the arm, the two loose hanging points being caught together with a tiny rose-bud. The upper point was attached to the shoulder, while the fourth point, which would naturally fall over the elbow, was rounded off gradually. From the back of the shoulders another elongated square of chiffon was suspended and allowed to fall loosely, giving a long cowl-like appearance.

It cannot be said that there is any particular "fashion" just now. Each individual, to a great extent, carries out her own particular taste, but there is generally some little new touch to chronicle. One of these is the shawl-collar. It is being carried out in any thick material, and also in the most supple furs, such as beaver, musquash, or mink. Fur coats have become very frivolous this year, and are no longer made only in the very ordinary shapes to which we have become accustomed, but are blossoming out into the most artistic affair. Fur kimonos have a chic of their own, and the draped fur coats are delicious; but then, it is only of late years that the furrier has discovered that they need not be the hard stiff "bullet-proof" garments of pre-war days. However, fur coats have not got things all to themselves this year, for the elect who really *know* have voted for the model of velvet, or duvetyn, or burracotta with a large cosy fur collar. Quite one of the most popular models is made on perfectly straight simple lines in velvet with a deep hem, deep cuffs, a still deeper collar of mink, and boasting a narrow band of velvet round the hips—an entirely new departure, as last winter we were all wearing our belts under our arms. The effect of the former is to give a perfectly straight slim line, provided, of course, that the wearer belongs to the band of patriots who have bowed to the dictates of the Food Controller during the last few years, and have been rewarded by that coveted symmetry of outline.

In all the whirl of collecting money for the Red Cross and other War-time charities, it is good to know that our London cripple girls have not been forgotten. After all, they are the sisters and daughters of our splendid men, and it is only right that they should be helped to earn their own living without being dependent on philanthropy. Some years ago a workroom was started for these girls in Poplar, and now there is yet another in West Kensington where they are taught to make some of the most beautiful lingerie I have ever seen. There is nothing shoddy or cheap-looking about this work, which is perfect of its kind. Imagine a nightgown made in sheer lawn, so beloved of Americans, beauti-

The Ideal Beauty.

What it is, and How to Possess it.

By "ESTELLE."

DO you know what it is like to read a novel — one that begins with a heroine whose charms are not enumerated, but whose personality and environment seem to have some resemblance to your own? And then, on page four or five, to find something of this sort: "Her (the heroine's) hair rippled in soft, shining waves round her delicately-tinted face. She had one of those peach-like skins that never seem to roughen or to burn. Her eyes were hidden at the moment under long silken lashes, but a dimple hovered at the corner of her red mouth, as she pulled a rose to pieces between her white hands"—and so on.

At this point, if you are analytic, you begin to compare this exquisite creature with yourself. With what results? To find that you are hopelessly at a disadvantage, and that you are lucky if you can find one point in your looks that can vie with her fictitious charms. The story loses half its interest; you are no longer identified with the heroine.

But has it ever occurred to you that with a little patience and perseverance, that flowery description, with one or two slight alterations, might be applied to YOU?

YOU CAN'T HELP YOUR FEATURES—BUT you can help your skin, your hair, your hands—and that is something. Look carefully at the description of your heroine. Nothing is said about her features, unless you count a dimple as a feature. Let us be systematic.

Her hair is described as "rippling in shining waves."

YOUR HAIR WOULD BE JUST AS PRETTY if you would shampoo your hair with stallax instead of that common soap or manufactured "wash," that you are ruining it with at present. If, owing to your unkind treatment, it is thin and inclined to split at the ends, you should try this simple home recipe. One package boranium, obtained from any chemist, mixed with ¼ pint bay rum. Boranium possesses wonderful properties of renewing the strength, beauty, and natural colour of the hair. "Perhaps," you say; "this is all very well." Admitted that these preparations make the hair thick and glossy, how can anything but nature, or hot irons, produce "rippling waves"? Have you never heard of silmerine?

A little liquid silmerine applied on the hair before going to bed and brushed out in the morning, will transform your straight locks into the most bewitching tight curls or fascinating "kinks," according to the amount used and your individual tastes.

To return to our heroine. "How can I ever accomplish a peach-like skin," you ask in despair, "and having secured it, how render it impervious to roughness and sunburn? No, it is too much." Nevertheless, there is much **TRUTH IN OLD PROVERBS,** and when you so glibly quote "Beauty is but skin deep," do you realise that you are stating a solid, undeniable fact—one on which a whole philosophy of beauty has been based?

Below a skin that may be blotched, roughened, and discoloured, is a complexion as clear and as fresh as a little child's. But how remove the ugly outer layer, the pores of which are clogged with waste matter? The skin is a delicate fabric, and no force must be used. Mercolised wax, which contains oxygen, will, if applied like ordinary cold cream, invisibly absorb the ugly outer cuticle, leaving the lovely new skin in all its glory.

To protect this delicate skin from the devastating effects of wind and weather, bathe the face and neck with a little cleminite dissolved in water, which will form the lightest of films over the complexion, at the same time giving it the much-coveted "peach-like bloom."

As to the long silky lashes, a little mennaline rubbed into the roots of the lashes with the tips of the fingers before going to bed will work wonders. If your hands are not as white as you would wish, a little lemon juice will remove bad stains, and bicrolium jelly will take away all redness and chapping.

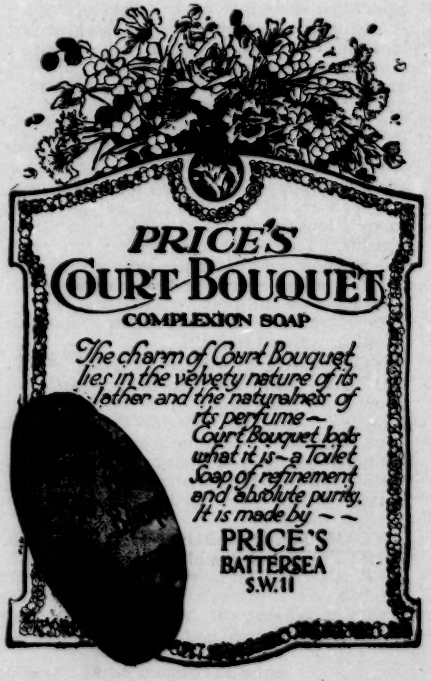
A week or two of this treatment will make that description applicable to you. If you sit and pull a rose to pieces, any critical observer will have time to notice charms in you which attract immediate attention, and which will bear the closest scrutiny.

fully hand-embroidered, and with a little drawn-thread work to complete the effect—perhaps also a tiny edging of real lace. They are very sensible, all these undies, for there is nothing to get torn or out of order in the wash, and many of them were even guiltless of ribbons. Not that this would not suit all of us. I heard one fair damsel remark the other day that she was so sorry for the poor men, because they couldn't have pink or blue ribbons in their shirts, and she wouldn't be a man for anything on earth—chiefly for that reason, so I gathered.

Quite the newest trimming that is finding favour with some of the most exclusive dress designers is a kind of fringe of little woollen pompoms called "Les Nenettes," placed round and round the skirt of the more dressy afternoon frocks, line upon line, till it reaches almost to the hips. It has a quaint effect, but is not a very pretty idea, since it reminds one too forcibly of one's dining-room curtains; but it is finding favour in many exclusive quarters, so is worth mentioning. The foundation of these frocks is usually carried out very simply in crêpe-de-chine or charmeuse. The high-necked blouse made in jersey material and trimmed with galon is gaining in popularity every day, and is very attractive when worn with a well-cut tailor-made. It is yet another of those novelties that are worthy of a special mention, and are likely to remain with us for many a long and chilly month to come.

YULETIDE GIFTS

With the approach of Christmas the annual problem of what to give our friends and those of our relations who are still our friends arises once more. It is the Peace Christmas, and will have to be marked by something rather out of the common in the way of gifts. The great stores will be full of attractive and beautiful things, but those who know how to get value and beauty for money do not always do their shopping at the great stores. For special occasions, when they wish their gift to carry some special message or to be a remembrance of some special occasion, they have their own particular haunts. One of these is the Cameo Corner—at No. 1, New Oxford Street—where Mr. Edward Good will put before you drawer upon drawer and tray after tray of *objets d'art* and will lean across the counter and talk about them with you in the manner rather of the connoisseur and the collector rather than the merchant. Exquisite, however, as are these examples of a classic art, they are by no means beyond the purse of ordinary people. Nor is Mr. Good's collection limited to Cameos. No. 1, New Oxford Street, is full of curious and quaint gems and jewels with histories. Finally, you will find there a collection of beads that may be a surprise to you if you are not acquainted with the beauty and colour of real beads. Those who love beautiful things because they *are* beautiful and not merely because they are expensive should not miss this collection, which contains wonderful necklaces in the colours of Baghdad and all the East, at prices from £1 to £25.


PRICE'S
COURT BOUQUET
COMPLEXION SOAP
The charm of Court Bouquet lies in the velvety nature of its lather and the naturalness of its perfume—
Court Bouquet looks what it is—a Toilet Soap of refinement and absolute purity.
It is made by — —
PRICE'S
BATTERSEA
S.W.11

"The Hidden Hand"

APHORISMS PERSONIFIED By H. DENNIS BRADLEY

VULGARITY is the vogue. It is possible to vulgarise oneself on refinement, but it is preferable to refine oneself on vulgarity. And contracting a fashionable disease, I am impelled to operate aphoristically.

* * * * *

Truth has become a stranger. It is therefore almost as amusing to write the truth as to listen to a good lie. I lead an amusing life.

* * * * *

I occasionally converse truthfully, but it requires much explaining, and—the day is so short.

* * * * *

I am inundated with understanding. "Your views are splendid, but, of course, you will wind up in prison." So writes a soldier. "You must be a Christ-like character," writes another of my innumerable correspondents. But my intimates tell me they do not agree with either.

* * * * *

I am neither Bolshevist nor Carmelite. I aspire to higher things.

* * * * *

I relish the doubt whether the war will make the world safe for Democracy, Bureaucracy, or Shamrockcracy.

* * * * *

My views on any subject can be stated in five words, "I disagree with most people." This is no proof of insanity.

* * * * *

National ideals are not merely beautiful in conception; they are the subtlest argument to empower the conscription of liberty.

* * * * *

War brings the most affluent emotions to inhuman nature. Should you doubt this, question the Brewers and the Bureaucrats.

* * * * *

If one accepts Christianity heaven must now be overflowing with young men. Hell will fill up later when the old men die—naturally.

Pessimists say "The good die young." Optimists say "The Young die! Good!"

* * * * *

When the Profiteer is asked "What did you do in the great war, daddy?" he will be able to answer proudly "I did well."

* * * * *

It is more logical for sterile spinsters to theorise on love than for childless men to dogmatise on the future of "our children."

* * * * *

Old men in armchairs have little regard for veracity. We hear them saying "We have won the war"; why not "They"? Or is it an erroneous impression that the young men in the trenches had something to do with it?

* * * * *

I do not really like commercialism, but I appreciate caviare and a Rolls Royce. And so I am commercial—occasionally.

* * * * *

My only objection to business is that it interferes with pleasure.

* * * * *

Wisdom is negative unless it enables one to appreciate the joy of foolishness.

* * * * *

Unless handicapped by education, it is not really difficult to become a millionaire if one is unscrupulous, but it impairs the mental and physical digestion.

* * * * *

Wartime increases should be anything but a boast, but from 1909 to 1914 the business of Pope & Bradley increased 1,000 per cent. So appearances convict me of commercialism. But no credit is due for commercial success. It only requires an ordinary intelligence. This may, of course, read as a reflection on the average intelligence.

14, Old Bond St., W. 1.

MOTORS AND MOTORING

By W. Whittall

THE PETROL SITUATION

It seems to me that the attitude of the Petrol Control Department of the Board of Trade is badly in need of an overhaul. I do not propose to argue that it would be sound, or even possible, to release immediately sufficient motor fuel to enable us to resume all our normal motoring activities. Nevertheless, I do know that there are enormous stocks of petrol in the country; that the demands of the Services are being very greatly reduced; and that the imports of spirit are not likely to fall in volume for some months to come. As a matter of fact, I do not think I am wrong in saying that before long the storage resources of the country will be severely taxed to accommodate the motor fuel that will be available. And yet we are merely told that there *may* shortly be an increase in the allowance for ordinary purposes. A certain amount will first be released for business use; then the public Services will be provided for; but there is small prospect of the poor private motorist being given relief until after peace is definitely signed.

Now we shall be very fortunate if peace is concluded on a definite basis this side of May next. It may be a little earlier, but to think so is to take the most sanguine view of things. Consequently it will be full six months before you and I will be able to resume motoring on the pre-war scale. If it were simply a question of our own personal pleasure or convenience I, at least, should be reasonably content to take matters as they come, but it goes deeper than that. In the fighting forces of the Crown there are at the moment some 50,000 men who, before the war, were employed as motor drivers. These men will, many of them, be returning to civil life presently, and will want their old jobs back; but, until we can get petrol, there can be obviously nothing doing in this direction. What is to happen to them and their families? Again, what is the use of my ordering a new car for quick delivery if the purchaser cannot get the wherewithal to run it on? Clearly, if the situation remains as it is, and the Petrol Control people will tell us nothing about it, there must be consequent slackness of business in the motor trade, since everyone will postpone his order until the situation is cleared up. At least, it should be possible for some more definite statement to be made than we have been vouchsafed up to now. Let us have a clear scheme for release; the Controller *must* be able to give us the dates on which it will be possible to progressively release the supplies in hand and to come. As a matter of fact, I am very much of opinion that those supplies are sufficient in volume to justify an immediate return to pre-war conditions of motoring, were it not that on grounds of public policy, unconnected with the question of supplies, it would not be advisable to move too fast. Still, let us have a concrete scheme, and we shall know where we stand.

A MOTOR SHOW IN 1919

The Society of Motor Manufacturers has told us that it will hold another Motor Show in November of 1919. That really looks like the peace policy we want. Nothing better than such an announcement could have been given to us now, since it demonstrates that the motor industry is not going to be left on the mark at the start of the race for industrial supremacy. I think the Society is very much to be congratulated on being the first organization of its kind to announce a policy, if only because the motor industry is one of those which has the maximum amount of reorganization to carry out in order to fit itself for its normal activities. With very few fortunate exceptions, the whole energies of the firms composing the British industry have been diverted into quite strange channels during the past four years. Their whole works' organization has been turned right round to meet the exigencies of war work; their plant has been altered out of recognition; and their staffs have been changed entirely in composition and methods. That they are able thus early definitely to give a date for their return to normal conditions speaks well for the industry. And what a show it will be, and how it will bring back old times!

When the Lather fades away—

Just as you are ready with the razor, lo—what happens? You work up another lather, and try again.

But why not use a shaving soap that gives a lasting lather—a lather that remains?

PRICE'S

REGINA

SHAVING STICK

1/-

Keeps moist on the face till the end of the shave.

Sold a lather, too! Creamy, fragrant, foamy, smooth—

[illegible]

Your dealer keeps Regina Shaving Stick. Made by

PRICE'S, BATTERSEA, LONDON, S.W. 11.

The Brolt

Self-Starter Never Fails

It sets the engine running—instantly and every time.

The "Brolt" Starter cannot fail. Note the positive gear-drive to the engine flywheel.

Write to-day for a copy of the "Brolt" Booklet. It is full of interest to all motorists.

BROWN BROTHERS LTD.

GREAT EASTERN STREET, LONDON, E.C. 2

Showrooms: 18, Newman Street, W. 1

Positive Gear-drive to Engine Flywheel

It is famous for its shrewd and humorous analysis of current events, and its caustic comments are valued by men of affairs.

Its list of subscribers is practically the Army and Navy List.

To casual purchasers its price is **2d.** at any bookstall or newsagent.

To make sure of having your copy on your breakfast table every Friday morning, send 11s. for British, or 13s. for overseas, delivery for one year to

"TOWN TOPICS"

(THE JOY RAG)

27, Tudor Street, London, E.C. 4